LICENSED,

April 24th.
1688.

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A

DISCOURSE

OF THE

Saving Grace

OF

GOD.

By the late Reverend and Learned

DAVID CLARKSON,

Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON,

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A

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GOD.

A PREFACE.

THE very Title-page, mentioning the Subject, and the Authour of the following Diſcourſe, leaves little need of a Recommendatory Preface.

For what Subject can be ſuppoſed more inviting than this of the Grace of God? repreſented to ſuch as were loſt, and deſigning their Salvation? If we were the Inhabitants of ſome other World, never loſt, or in which Sin, and Vindictive Juſtice had no place; 'twere a grateful Contemplation to us, if from thence, we had the opportunity to view the Methods of Grace for

the ſaving of miſerable periſhing Creatures in ſuch a World as this. As the kindneſs, and benignity of the unfal'n Angels *makes them* ſtoop down *, *and pry, with* earneſt deſire †, *and no doubt high pleaſure, to obſerve what was doing to this purpoſe in this wretched World of ours.*

* Παρακύψαι ἐπιθυμοῦσιν.

† 1 Pet. 1. 12.

But who can conſider himſelf *as loſt, and not apprehend the name of* ſaving grace *to carry with it a pleaſant, joyfull ſound? It too plainly argues a ſtrange complication of* ſtupidity, *and* lightneſs of mind, *when to any, who are* themſelves of *that* loſt race, *the Grace of God, by which only they can be ſaved, is unſavoury, and without reliſh. And it is not leſs ſtrange if they can expect to be ſaved without it.*

There are ſo many ſenſible Miſeries *continually urging Mankind, that if they be compared with what obtains in the common belief of the moſt (of whatſoever Religion,)*

and

and whereof few profess any doubt, that one would wonder all should not be much taken up in meditating some way of escape, and how they may be saved out of such a Gulf as this. For, setting aside the inward evils that infest mens minds, (which carry most of Sting and Pungency in them, to those of an awakened mental sense) *'tis obvious to their* duller outward *senses, that they are encompassed, and often seiz'd with innumerable Calamities, Sicknesses, Pains, Violences from one another, and other disasters, from which they cannot be certain to be safe one moment, and that they are all mortal, and after a little time must certainly dy. The most profess themselves to believe they have about them somewhat immortal, and that this World will at length have an end. Divers* Pagans *have agreed with* Christians *in the apprehension that it will end by Fire, an universal Conflagration, and of an after Felicity to be had somewhere else.*

Now what Power of Nature can they think of, that should save them out of so common a Ruine? Or what is left them to think of besides, unless they will yield themselves to perish without remedy (which the Nature of man abhorrs from) but of being saved by Grace.

They that have any Notion of God, cannot think Grace unworthy of him. Some of the Epicurean Faith, that thought it unsuitable to the Nature of God to be toucht with Anger (and who might therefore think our Infelicities to befall us of course, without being any effects of divine displeasure) yet were less averse to think he might be toucht with Grace, (as * Lactantius takes notice,) and so left themselves room for the apprehension, that our Felicity should be owing to the Benignity and Favour of God. But what thoughts of Him can be more unworthy, or less agreeing with themselves, than, while he is acknowledg'd to be a

* De Irâ Dei.

Mind,

Mind, *a* Spirit, *the* firſt, eternal Mind, *and the* Father of Spirits, *to ſuppoſe he ſhould be leſs kind, benign, and gracious to our Minds, and Spirits, than to our baſer Fleſh? Or that they who expect from his favour a ſtate of future freedom from bodily pains, diſeaſes, and death, ſhould not expect from it much more a Felicity ſuitable to their Nobler part? and ſeek thence what is of ſo apparent neceſſity, beforehand, to prepare and form their Minds and ſpirits for ſuch a Felicity?*

And one would think, that as they who are better inſtructed in the Affairs of Gods Government over men, and that know how to aſcribe to him a juſt diſpleaſure, and anger for their common Apoſtacy, and revolt from him, that ſhall be no way unbecoming, but moſt agreeable to an infinitely perfect Being; ſhould be moſt apt to approve, and admire the Methods, which the Grace of God hath pitcht upon, for expiating the guilt of Sin by a Redeemer:

ſo

ſo they ſhould not be unapt to apprehend the Neceſſity of gracious Operations upon the ſpirits of men, to deliver them from ſuch diſtempers and diſaffections, as are plainly inconſiſtent with their final Salvation, and Bleſſedneſs; and give them ſuch diſpoſitions as are requiſite thereto.

Can any thing be more ſuitable to the Grace of God, than, when he hath found out a way, wherein he might, upon terms not injurious to the dignity of his Government, pardon their ſins, he ſhould alſo inwardly apply himſelf to them, cure the blindneſs, carnality, and averſion of their Minds, incline, and inable them to know, truſt, love, obey, and converſe with him, without which an Atonement, and pardon would avail them nothing, and in which of themſelves they can effect nothing?

'Tis eaſie to frame abſtract Diſcourſes, *and* general Ideas *of what might be performed by thoſe* noble Powers, *a mans own* Underſtanding, *and* Will: *but what*

can

can actually be effected, in particular, and circumstantiated cases, against the stream of sensual Inclination, either to the ingaging of intense thoughts, *or by* thinking, *they perhaps are most apt to pronounce confidently, who have least tryed.*

Nor is any thing more congruous to the notion of Grace, *than that it be* at liberty *herein.* Unfree Grace *were to every mans understanding a plain contradiction. Neither can any inconvenient or ill Consequence follow upon its being apprehended most sovereignly free. Or any thing that is not most suitable* to God, *and* to us. *It naturally follows that He be not neglected, that He be supplicated, and sought unto, that we absolutely, and with great* reverence, *and* hope, *surrender, resign, and commit our selves to Him. Which how majestick, august, great, and God-like is it,* on his part! *how correspondent to his very Nature! Wherupon we are told,* (Psalm 147. 11.)

The

The Lord taketh pleaſure in them that fear him; in thoſe that hope in his mercy. *And how ſuitable is it to the* condition of wretched and impotent creatures *that are periſhing, and cannot ſave themſelves! And to ſuch one would think no ſubject ſhould be more acceptable than this of the ſaving Grace of God: Nor therefore a Diſcourſe upon it unacceptable.*

Eſpecially from ſuch an Authour, *who tho his great Humility, and remoteneſs from all Oſtentation of himſelf, did as much vail him, as was poſſible to him; yet his ſingular Worth could not be hid, and indeed the leſs, by how much the more he endeavour'd it. His clear and comprehenſive Mind, his excellent Learning, his reaſoning argumentative Skill, his ſolid, moſt diſcerning Judgment, his indefatigable Induſtry, his large Knowledge, and great Moderation in the matters of our unhappy Eccleſiaſtical differences, his calm diſpaſſio-*

nate

nate Temper, his pleaſant and moſt amiable Converſation did carry ſo great a luſtre with them, as that, notwithſtanding his moſt beloved Retiredneſs, they could not, in his Circumſtances, but make him be much known, and much eſteem'd, and lov'd by all that had the happineſs to know him; and make the loſs of him be much lamented. But he was by the things that made his continuance ſo deſirable in this World, the fitter for a better, and more ſuitable World. He liv'd here as one that was more a-kin to that other World than this; and who had no other buſineſs here, but to help in making this better. From ſuch an hand *one may reaſonably expect a* Treatiſe *very highly valuable* upon ſuch a Subject. *Which I do with ſo great confidence, that, thô I have not as yet (wanting Opportunity) throughly perus'd it, I make no doubt to invite ſuch to the reading of it, as apprehend the value of the* Grace of God,

and

and their own Salvation, *earneſtly deſiring that, as their Satisfaction herein may be, in its completion, alike early; ſo it may be equally great with that, which is with much aſſurance expected by*

One very deſirous any way to promote the common Salvation,

John Howe.

THE

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Books written and published by the Author of this ensuing Treatise, and sold by Tho. Parkhurst *at the* Bible *and* Three Crowns *at the lower end of* Cheap-side, *near* Mercers-Chappel.

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A

A

DISCOURSE

OF

Free-Grace.

EPHES. II. 8.

By Grace ye are ſaved.

THE Apoſtle, the great Aſſerter of *Free-Grace*, in the 20th *Verſe*, compares the Church to *a Temple*: And it is his deſign in this Epiſtle to ſhew the Influence Grace hath to the raiſing of this Building. He undertakes to prove, that the whole Structure of Salvation is to be attributed alone to Grace.

The Foundation was laid from Eternity by Grace in Election, *Chap.* 1. 4, 5. The poliſhing and diſpoſing of each particular Stone in the Building, by Juſtification and Sanctification, were all acts of Grace; *Chap.* 1. 7. & 2. 5. & 4. 13, 14. And it is Grace that lays on the Top-ſtone in Glory; *Chap.* 2. 6. So that we may honour this Temple with the ſame Acclamations, which they uſed to theirs, *Zach.* 4. 7. and cry *Grace, grace*, unto it. The ſumm of the whole Diſcourſe is propounded in the Text, *By Grace ye are ſaved.*

We will not divide what God from Eternity has joined together, *Grace* and *Salvation:* But from them intirely taken, offer you this

Obſervation, *Salvation is wholly and only to be attributed to Grace.*

We need go no further for divine Teſtimony to this Truth, than theſe two Chapters. Election, *Chap.* 1. 4, 5. Redemption, *ver.* 7. Vocation, *ver.* 16. Juſtification, *Chap.* 2. *ver.* 3, 4. Sanctification, *ver.* 5. Glorification, *ver.* 6. What he ſpeaks of the whole here, he affirms of every part thereof in thoſe places. The whole and all the parcels are of Grace.

For

For Explication. By *Salvation*, underſtand both the Decree of God, by which the Elect were ordained to Salvation, and the Execution of that Decree, begun here, and conſummated in glory.

That we may know what Grace means, take notice of three words, uſed promiſcuouſly in Scripture, which yet admit of ſome diſtinction; the knowledge whereof will lead us to the diſtinct knowledge of this term. Theſe are *Love*, *Mercy*, *Grace*.

To *Love*, is *velle bonum*, to will the Happineſs of the Object loved. It is not in God ſuch an affection as in us, though in effect it proves *affectus unionis*, and brings God and his People together.

Mercy does *velle bonum miſeris*. So it adds a Limitation to the Object, which Love leaves indefinite. It is for thoſe that are miſerable.

Grace does *velle bonum liberè*. So this limits not the Object, as the former, but qualifies the Act. It acts freely.

So that Mercy is Love to thoſe that are miſerable. Grace is Love in him that is unobliged. Unobliged, I ſay, either by Neceſſity, Merit, or Motive. Grace then, in God, is nothing but *free Love*.

1. Free in reſpect of *Conſtraint*; when there is no neceſſity he ſhould fix his Love

upon this Object at all, or upon this rather than another. This is *ſpontaneum.*

2. Free in reſpect of *Merit*; when there is nothing in the Object that deſerves Love, either abſolutely or comparatively, this is *gratuitum.*

3. Free in reſpect of *Motive*; when there is nothing in the Object to move this Affection to pitch upon it at all, or upon it rather than another. This is *liberum*, tho' it expreſs it not fully.

In all theſe reſpects, the Grace of God in beſtowing Salvation upon any of the Sons of men, is free Love.

1. There's no Neceſſity God ſhould ſave men. He is a moſt free Agent, whoſe liberty is inconſiſtent with every degree of Neceſſity *ab extra.* It was in his choice either to have created no man, or to have condemned all men, or to have ſaved thoſe who are now condemned.

2. There is nothing in Man that can merit Salvation: for there is no good thing in him that he can call his own. All is of Gift; and the beſt thing in man bears no proportion to Salvation: but where there is Merit, there muſt be both Propriety and Proportion.

3. There is nothing in Man can move God to ſave him. If any thing, his Miſery; but

but this is no Motive absolutely, because it is wilfull. Man willingly involved himself in it, and is unwilling to be delivered from it upon the terms propounded in the Gospel. Nor can it be a Motive comparatively, to save one man rather than another, because all are by nature equally miserable.

So then Salvation is by Grace, because it is a gift of free Love to such in whom there can be nothing to inforce it, nothing to deserve it, nor any thing to move him to bestow it.

The Demonstrations are drawn from *God*, from *Man*.

From *Man*, The *Impotency*, *Deformity*, *Enmity* of man against God, makes it evident, that Salvation must be wholly, only from Grace.

1. *Impotency*. What a poor despicable creature is Man! the best of men! What a wonder the great God should think of saving him! His rise was from the Earth. He is but at best Dust and Ashes, a poor piece of Clay. He dwells in houses of Clay. His Foundation is in the dust, and is crushed by the Moth, *Job* 4. 19. A stately thing sure which the very Moth can crush, and crumble into his first principle, Dust.

The most potent victorious King, that ever *Israel* had, puts a Worm amongst his

titles, *Pſ.* 22. 6. *I am a Worm.* The greateſt man in the Eaſt derives his Pedigree no higher; *I have ſaid to corruption, thou art my Father, and to the Worm thou art my Mother and my Siſter*, Job 17. 14. And if the greateſt men on earth, who beſt underſtood themſelves, were no greater in their own account; what do we think men are in Gods account? The numerous poſterity of *Jacob* have no greater Title, *Iſa.* 41. 14. *Fear not, worm Jacob*: and if that vaſt multitude, which was like the Stars of the Heavens, and the Sands on the Sea-ſhore, which cannot be numbred, be but as one Worm in his eye; what do we think is one Man?

But we are too high yet. Men in the account of God, compared with him, are not ſo much as Worms. Abſolutely, in themſelves, they are more; but compared with him not ſo much, *Iſa.* 40. 22. It is he *that ſitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſs-hoppers*; this is ſomething leſs than Worms; yet leſs in his eye, than theſe in ours.

But we yet go lower. Worms and Graſs-hoppers, tho' moſt deſpicable, are yet animate Beings; and the ſoul of the leaſt Creature, in *Auguſtins* account, is more excellent than the Body of the Sun. This is too high yet;

What

What then are men in Gods eſteem? ſee *ver.* 15. The *Nations are as the drop of a Bucket, and are accounted as the ſmall duſt of the Ballance: behold he takes up the Iſles as a very little thing.* What? all the Nations of the Earth as one drop? As an Atom? What proportion then do ye think we bear to this drop, to this Atom, who are but as drops and Atoms in compariſon of all the Nations of the Earth.

Sure now we are low enough. Our thoughts can ſcarce go lower. I, but ſtay, we are not in Gods account thus much. A drop, an Atom is ſomething, tho a very little thing. But *Ver.* 17. *All Nations before him are as nothing.* Alas, where are we then, ſo near the low condition of Non-entity? Yes, and lower too; for it follows, *and they are accounted to him leſs than nothing.*

See then what Man is in Gods account, as leſs than that which is leſs than nothing. And can you imagine any thing in this Nothing, man, that ſhould oblige the great God to ſave him? O, ſure it is Grace, free Love; and ſuch as may aſtoniſh Heaven and Earth; that the great God, who meaſures the Seas in the hollow of his Hand, who ſpans the Heavens, and weighs the Mountains, ſhould condeſcend to do thus much

for any of theſe poor deſpicable nothings: ſhould contrive their Salvation from Eternity, and ſend his Son, the Son of his Love, of his delight, to procure it with his Blood, and then admit them to an eternal injoyment of himſelf in Glory.

2. The *Deformity* of man as he is ſinful. We ſhewed before, man was Nothing, leſs than nothing, in the ſight of God. Now we will ſhew, he is worſe than nothing; even a deformed nothing, or rather nothing but Deformity.

'Tis true, by Creation he was a beautiful Creature, moulded after the Image of the firſt Beauty, bearing the ſuperſcription of God. He was then as a bright Morning Star, when he firſt appeared in the World. But he forthwith fell from his primitive ſtation, the Orb of Innocency: He fell from thence into the Puddle of ſin, into *thick mire and clay*, as the Pſalmiſt. *Pſal.* 40. 2. And being drenched in ſin, he became more deformed and abominable in the eye of God, than that which is moſt loathſom to us. The vail of Light and Holineſs, wherewith he was Beautified, being torn off the Soul, Sin beſmeared it with ugly filthineſs and pollution. The divine Light and Holineſs, which ſhined in his Soul, is vaniſhed; and Darkneſs and

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Deformity has ſeized on him, and over-ſpread him. Holineſs was the moral Form of the Soul; but now ſin gives it morally both its being and denomination. So that, what may be ſaid of ſin in the abſtract, as that it is Deformity, Pollution, Filthineſs, may be ſaid of man in the concrete, he is deformed, filthy, polluted. We have cauſe to complain of this woful change, in the words, of the Prophet, with a little variation, *Iſa.* 3. 24. *Inſtead of a ſweet ſmell*, there is *a ſtink*, *inſtead of well-ſet hair baldneſs*, and Deformity inſtead of Beauty.

Sin has left neither συμμετρία nor ἰυχρωία in the Souls of ſinners, neither Proportion nor good Complexion. The Fall put all out of joynt, and left the Soul blind, lame, crooked, diſeaſed, nay dead in ſins, *&c.* Theſe are the familiar Epithets which Scripture gives our ſinful ſtate.

The Viſage of the Soul is loathſomly beſpotted. Nor has Sin brought upon it ſimple Deformity alone; but, which is worſe, Uncleanneſs, ſuch as is compared to that of a *removed Woman*, *Ezek.* 36. 17. Nay the beſt thing that is in it, or proceeds from it, is but as a *menſtruous rag*, *Iſa.* 54.

I, but thô this be noiſom and unpleaſing, yet there's no danger, no Infection in it. O but ſin is a contagious Pollution, 'tis like a Plague-

Plague-ſore in the heart, an infectious Leproſy; it will diffuſe its malignity like the poyſon of Aſps.

I, but if a man be viſited with the Plague or Leproſy, he ſeems rather an object of compaſſion, than deteſtation; rather to be pitied than loathed. Go yet one ſtep further.

Sin is not only contagious, but a loathſom noiſom Filthineſs. The Holy Ghoſt compares it to the ſtench of an open Sepulchre, to the Vomit of a Dog, to the corrupted matter of a putrified Ulcer. Such is the temper of a Soul by ſin.

I'll go no further. It may be the hearing of theſe is offenſive; how much more to ſee, ſmell, or touch them. Yet a ſinful man is more ugly in the Eye, more offenſive to the Noſtrils, more loathſom to the Lord, than any of theſe can be to the quickeſt or moſt delicate of our Senſes.

Alas, wretched Man! how juſtly maiſt thou or I ſpeak, what *Mephiboſheth* uſes in complement to *David*, 2 *Sam.* 9. 8. *What is thy ſervant, that thou ſhouldſt look on ſuch a dead Dog as I am?*

Can any Soul expect, that ſuch a Monſter as this ſhould be the Object of any ones Love, much leſs of Gods? How hopeleſs may mans Salvation ſeem, if we look

look on him in this ſtate! What! is the eternal Love of God, the precious Blood of Chriſt, for ſuch a Wretch as this! Is there any thing in him, in us, to merit, to move Love? Who would not rather think, every ſon of *Adam* ſhould with indignation be kickt out of the preſence of ſo holy a God? Sure if there be any hopes, it muſt be from Grace, free Love, and ſuch as could no where be entertained but in the breaſt of infinite Goodneſs.

3. The *Enmity* of ſinners againſt God, this makes it evident beyond all exception. The Impotency and Deformity of man, in the ſtate of ſin, ſhews there is nothing lovely in him; but if there were not, yet if he had any love for God, this love, without any other conſideration, might be ſome inducement to move the Lord to love him; and ſo his love might ſeem leſs free, as having ſome motive from without.

But the caſe is otherwiſe. As there is nothing Lovely in him, ſo neither is there any Love to God; nay there is a high degree of Hatred and Enmity.

The Wiſdom of the Fleſh, the very beſt thing in man, *is Enmity to God, Rom.* 8. 7. And this Enmity is manifeſted in contradicting the Will of God, and running croſs

to

to his Commands: for if this be our *love to God*, as the Apoſtle ſays, *that we keep his Commands*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. then this is Hatred of God, that we will not keep them.

And this Diſobedience of a Sinner proceeds from his Hatred of the God that commands, and not only of that which is commanded, yea rather from that than this. For what Sinner is there, who does not believe, that what the Law commnds is Juſt in it ſelf and good for us?

So that the Enmity reaches God himſelf. *Who is the Lord*, ſays the ſinner in his heart, *that I ſhould obey him?*

Further, Sinners revolt from God, and conſpire with his greateſt Enemy, joyn in confederacy with Satan. They, (as thoſe in *Iſa.* 28. 15.) have made a Covenant with Hell; and with Death are they at agreement. They give up their *members as Weapons of Unrighteouſneſs*, to fight againſt God, *Rom.* 6. 19. It is the condition of all, by nature. Every Sinner, before the Lord conquer him by his Grace, is at open enmity with God, and does in effect bid defiance to the Almighty. The acts of his life are acts of Hoſtility againſt God. Nor is it a defenſive war only, that would be more excuſeable; but the deſign

is, not to ſecure himſelf only, but to put down God, and diveſt him of his Soveraignty. This is the voice of their Hearts and Lives, We will not have this God to rule over us. Sin, where it reigns, does as much as is in its power to depoſe the Soveraign Lord of the World. It denies in effect that he is God: For that which denies his eſſential Perfections and Attributes, does deny him to be God. He that gives up himſelf to ſin, denies in a manner all his divine Excellencies, his Goodneſs, Wiſdom, Power, Juſtice, Mercy, Immenſity, *Pſal.* 50. 21. He would not go on in ſin, if he did not ſay in his heart that he is not the Chief Good; becauſe ſin deprives him of this Good, cuts him off from the Injoyment of it: or elſe he believes not that it will deprive him of the chief Good, and ſo denies his Truth, who has affirmed and declared it; and not believing him herein makes him a Liar.

He durſt not ſin, but that he thinks God is not preſent to ſee him; and if ſo, he denies his Immenſity. Or if he ſee him, he thinks he cannot puniſh him; and ſo denies his Power. Or if he be able, yet he thinks he will not puniſh him; and ſo denies his Juſtice. He would not turn aſide to other ways than he preſcribes, but that

he

he thinks he either cannot direct him in the beſt way, and ſo denies his Wiſdom; or that he will not direct him to the beſt, and ſo denies his Mercy. And thus much we might ſhew of the other Divine Perfections, how it tends to deface them all.

Lo here the horrid Enmity of Sin and Sinners againſt God. They deny he is God; call him, conſtructively and in effect, a finite, a weak, a fooliſh, a falſe, an unjuſt and unmercifull thing.

'Tis true, Sinners cannot do what they ſay and wiſh in their hearts. They have not Power to undeifie God, or to deprive him of his Divine Perfections; but this does not leſſen nor excuſe their Enmity againſt him: For it is true in evil, as well as in good, Where there is a willing mind, it is accounted as if it were done.

O the horrid nature of Sin! Be aſtoniſhed, O Heavens, and be ye horribly afraid at this Prodigious Enmity, which is in the Hearts of Sinners againſt God. Why is thy wrath reſtrained? O Lord; Why does not thy Indignation break forth, and deſtroy all Sinners from off the face of the Earth? Nay, why was not Heaven and Earth annihilated at the firſt appearance of ſuch horrid Treaſon, of ſuch deſperate Enmity?

But

But we have not yet diſcovered the height of this Enmity. What is the reaſon, that a Sinner ſhould thus ſet himſelf againſt God? It may be, he deſpairs of Salvation, while the Almighty rules; and therefore the deſire of his own Happineſs may be the cauſe of this oppoſition; and ſo it will not be pure Enmity, but ſome Principle of ſelf-love, that may make him ſo deſperate.

It is no ſuch matter; it is not Salvation that he cares for. He ſets himſelf againſt God; not out of any reſpect to ſecure his own well-being. For whom would he advance into the place of God? 'Tis the great enemy of his Salvation, Satan, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. 'Tis he, who by the conſent of Sinners is the *God of this world*; 'tis he they would have to rule in and over them, *Eph.* 2. 2. They are Children of obedience to him, but of diſobedience to God, and will be ſo, tho' they periſh for it.

Here then is the height of the Sinners Enmity againſt God. They had rather periſh Eternally under the Soveraignty of Satan, than be happy in ſubjection to the Scepter of God. Nay, ſinners would perſiſt in the height of this Enmity, and therefore reject all motions of Reconciliation, tho' the Lord condeſcend to beſeech them

them, with all moving arguments, to *be reconciled*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. They deſpiſe Salvation, and the means that tend to it. They manifeſted it, by crucifying the Lord of Life, when he came on purpoſe into the world to bring Salvation. *Come*, ſay they, *this is the Heir*, *Mat.* 21. 38. We cannot reach the Father, he is too far above us; but we have a fair occaſion to ſhew how well we wiſh him. This is the Heir, here is his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love and Delight, *come let us kill him*: and ſo they did; and ſo would other Sinners do, if they were in the ſame circumſtances with thoſe that did it. And there are thoſe, who *Crucifie again* the Lord of Life. And what do we leſs in venturing upon ways of ſin? ſince this is it which firſt crucified him. This is the deſperate diſpoſition of all Sinners in the ſtate of nature. We had ſo continued to Eternity, if the power of Grace had not broke in upon us, and drawn us to terms of Reconciliation.

And this being our State and temper naturally, can you think there was any thing in us, that could have moved the Lord to ſave us? What? can Hatred, ſuch deſperate Enmity, ſuch prodigious Malice againſt the Lord, move him to love us? O, if

O, if free Grace had not moved it ſelf, we had perſiſted in our oppoſition againſt the Lord; and had been eternally miſerable, as thoſe deſerve to be, who are found fighters againſt God, and open Enemies to him.

There are other Demonſtrations, that Salvation is of Grace only, which may be drawn from God himſelf; the conſideration of his Allſufficiency, Soveraignty.

(1.) The *Allſufficiency* and independency of God. He ſtood in no need at all of man, either for Happineſs or Glory, the leaſt degree of either. He had been eternally as happy, as glorious, if man had never been, or been ever miſerable.

1. In reſpect of *Happineſs*. He was perfectly, infinitely happy without us. He did not expect, he could not have the leaſt Degree of it from us. All degrees, all Fulneſs of it was in himſelf, before we had a being. The Divine Underſtanding was infinitely pleaſed and ſatisfied in the Contemplation of himſelf, the firſt Truth. The divine Will took infinite contentment and complacency in the injoyment of himſelf, the chief Good. The Object here was infinite and glorious Excellencies; and the Acts were infinitely perfect; and the Iſſue thereof muſt

needs be infinite Happineſs, both formal and objective. Chriſt, the *Eternal Wiſdom* of the Father, thus expreſſeth it, *Prov.* 8. 22. 30. Here are the mutual delights of the Father and the Son; thoſe injoyments, which hold forth the higheſt degree of Happineſs, before any creature had being. The Son was the Fathers *Delights* שַׁעֲשׁוּעִים *daily*, every moment, without the leaſt intermiſſion; *and rejoyced*, the word is מְשַׂחֶקֶת *was laughing before his face.* Thoſe happy ſouls, who are already admitted into the glorious Preſence, may gueſs, tho not comprehend, what happineſs there is in thoſe delights: we are in the dark, and can neither expreſs nor conceive how much it is; but tho we cannot conceive how great that Happineſs is, we may eaſily apprehend, that it cannot be made greater by any creature.

Beſides, Happineſs muſt ariſe from Union with ſome good, or the injoyment of it. Now all Goodneſs in Perfection, is included in the divine Being; and whatever good is in the creature, it is but an imperfect participation of that Primitive Goodneſs, or rather but a dim reſemblance of it. And ſhall we think that there can be any addition to his Happineſs from that which is ſo imperfectly without him, when

when all Excellencies are perfectly, eminently, infinitely in himself? Shall the Ocean of Bleſſedneſs ſeek an increaſe from that which is leſs than a Drop? Or the Sun of Glory borrow luſtre from a Glow-worm, a dim Spark? Or the Univerſe of all Happineſs greaten it ſelf by a Point, a Mote? No, the Lord was Bleſſed for ever, before man was in being; and he had been Bleſſed for ever, if man had never been. And if nothing had moved the Lord to ſave him, but a deſign to add to his own Happineſs, none of the Children of men had ever known Salvation.

2. In reſpect of *Glory*. The Lord does not depend upon man more for Glory, than Happineſs. He had been as Glorious, if we had continued in the State of Non-entity, or if we had Periſhed in our Sin, and ſunk into Miſery. It's true, we ſay the Lord glorifies his Mercy in our Salvation; but this is ſuch a Glory as he might have wanted, and yet have been no leſs Glorious. To clear this a little. The Glory of God is Eſſential or Relative. Gods Eſſential Glory is thoſe infinitely glorious Perfections and Excellencies which meet in the Divine Eſſence. This is that Glory, which no mortal eye ever ſaw, or can ſee. When *Moſes* deſired to ſee

his Glory, the Lord ſays to him, *Thou canſt not ſee my face and live*, Exod. 33. 18, 20. The face is the Seat of Beauty, where all the lines of Perfection do concenter, where all the rays of Glory are united. Theſe we can no more behold in his face, than a lump of Snow can ſuſtain the united vigor of the Sun-beams at noon day.

When the Queen of *Sheba* had ſeen the Glory of *Solomon*, it's ſaid *there was no ſpirit in her*, 1 King. 10. 5. The Soul, or Spirit in her (as in others) has a ſtrong inclination to unite with that which it apprehends to be moſt good; and beholding ſomething tranſcendently better without, than in the Body, ſeemed willing for that time to leave the Body, that it might enjoy and cloſe with what was more excellent. If the Lord ſhould unvail himſelf, and let us have a clear ſight of his glorious Excellencies, as they ſhine in himſelf; the Soul would leave the Body, the Union between them would be diſſolved; the ſpirit would be wrapt away with ſuch a ſight, and leave the Body dead. This may be the reaſon of what the Lord ſaid to *Moſes*; *No man can ſee my face*, i. e. my Eſſential Glory, *and live*.

Further, the *Eſſential Glory* of God is God himſelf, and therefore both Infinite and

and Eternal. It is Infinite as he is, and to that which is Infinite nothing can be added, it can no way be greater than it is already. It is Eternal too, and ſo before any thing was created, and conſequently no way dependant on the Creatures. By which it is manifeſt, that eſſential Glory is not at all increaſed by working mans Salvation

For Relative Glory, that indeed depends on the Creatures. But the Lord had been as glorious in himſelf, if this Glory had never been, as will appear from the Nature of it. The eſſential Attributes of God are his divine Perfections, abſolutely exiſting, without reſpect or relation to the Creatures. Relative Attributes are thoſe eſſential Perfections, as manifeſted to the Creatures, or rather the Manifeſtation of them. If then Eſſential Glory be the luſtre of thoſe eſſential Attributes, as ſhining in the divine Eſſence, which we ſhewed before, it muſt follow, that Relative Glory is that which reſults from the Manifeſtation of thoſe Perfections to the Creatures. For example, Relative Mercy is the Manifeſtation of eſſential Goodneſs in the Salvation of the Elect; and Relative Juſtice is the Manifeſtation of eſſential Righteouſneſs or Juſtice in

the Condemnation of the Reprobate.

Now God had been as glorious in himſelf, if he had never made known his Mercy or Juſtice to the World, if there had been no World, no Creatures made, to manifeſt theſe to, if there had been no Men or Angels to take notice of them. For, is the Sun made more ſplendid or beautiful by our beholding of it? No, it would be as glorious, if no Eye ever ſaw it. Did the *Iſraelites* eating Manna add any ſweetneſs to that pleaſant food? no ſure, it had been as ſweet in it ſelf, if no Palate had ever taſted it. Even ſo the Lord had been as powerful, if he had never created the World; no leſs merciful in himſelf, if he had never ſaved any, if there had been none to ſave; no leſs righteous, if there had been none to condemn, if he had never condemned any.

But becauſe this may ſeem ſtrange, and ſome may ſtick at it, let me add a Reaſon for it. The Manifeſtation of his Attributes to the World is a free Act, a tranſient Act. It is a certain rule in Divinity, *Quicquid Deus operatur ad extra libere fit*; every Act of God terminated on the Creatures, is a free Act. A free Act is that which may be done or not done. So that it was in the choice of the

the Divine Will (before it had determined it ſelf) to manifeſt Mercy, or not to ſhew it; to ſave man, or not to ſave him, to make him, or not. But if Salvation did add any thing to the Glory of God, our Salvation had been a neceſſary, and not a free Act; becauſe without it the Lord had wanted ſome degree of Glory, and ſo had not been moſt glorious, moſt perfectly ſo, and conſequently not himſelf.

Hence it is evident, that the Lord did not ſtand in need of our Salvation, to make him more glorious any way. He was infinitely glorious from Eternity; but theſe Manifeſtations of himſelf are in time, therefore can add nothing to his Glory, which was infinite before all time. The reaſon why he revealed his Mercy in ſaving man, was not becauſe this was needful to make himſelf more glorious. We muſt, as Chriſt ſhewed us, find the reaſon of it in his εὐδοκία, the good pleaſure of his Will, *Mat.* 11. 25, 26. ὅτι οὕτως ἐγένετο εὐδοκία; this was the reaſon of it, *Thy good pleaſure.* And to this the Apoſtle leads us, *Eph.* 1. 5, 9.

'Tis true alſo, we are ſaid to glorifie God by our Services, by the Acts and Exerciſes of Holineſs, *Pſal.* 50. 23. and

Joh. 15. 8. But how is this to be underſtood? even as he is ſaid to glorifie himſelf, when he manifeſts to us that he is glorious. So we are ſaid to glorifie him, when we acknowledge that he is Glorious, when we give a teſtimony to his glorious Perfections by word or deed. But neither his Manifeſtation, nor our Acknowledgment, does add to his Glory. He ſhews it, we take notice of it, but neither of theſe imports any addition to it. Hence *Pſal.* 16. 2. *My goodneſs extendeth not to thee.* If our Apprehenſions of God were as high as their Object; if our Affection to him were more than that of the Angels; if all our Prayers and Praiſes were Raptures, and all our Performances ſcrued up to the higheſt degree of Perfection that a created being is capable of: yet were we in this reſpect *unprofitable Servants*; the Lord upon this account would have no advantage by us: for as *Eliphaz* ſays to *Job*, Ch. 22. 2, 3. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelf? Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?* &c. No, the Lord may glorifie us, but he gains no glory by us, that is any advantage to him. He ſtands in no need of us to glorifie him; he had been as glo-

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rious if we had periſhed, or if we had been nothing. Therefore what Motive can there be in or from us, to oblige him to ſave us?

(2.) The *Soveraignity* and *Dominion* of God over his Creatures. As in reſpect of his Alſufficiency, he ſtands in no need of us; ſo in reſpect of his Soveraignty he ows us nothing; he is no way ingaged to us, or obliged by us: but may do what he will with us, either to ſave or not to ſave us. So it ſtands with us clearly, if we conſider his Dominion over us, in antecedence to his Purpoſe and Promiſe.

1. For he might have been ſatisfied in the *ſole injoyment* of his bleſſed ſelf, and never have vouchſafed a Being, much leſs Salvation and Glory, to any Creature.

2. Or if he would manifeſt himſelf to the Creatures, he might have formed more *excellent Creatures*, and more fit to be the Objects of his great and tranſcendent Love: for he did not act as a natural Agent *ad ultimum ſui poſſe*, to the utmoſt of all his Power.

3. Or if the Divine Will would determine it ſelf to give a Being to thoſe very Creatures that are now exiſtent; yet there was no neceſſity that he ſhould *ſave any* of them. He might have annihilated

hilated them, without any shew of Unrighteousnes: *For who can say unto* the King of Kings, *What dost thou?* Dan. 4. 35. might he not do with his own what he will?

4. Or if he would manifest his Love and Goodness in the Salvation of any that he had Created; yet who would not think all the *Angels* (those sometimes glorious Creatures) more capable of it, than any of the Children of men?

5. Or if unworthy Man must be the Subject of it; yet why *so many* men? He might have made fewer Vessels of Mercy, than are now formed by it, to be for ever filled with it.

6. Or if he would pitch upon so many, yet why *upon these* who are now set apart for Salvation, rather than those who are *past by?* Why are these chosen, and the other left? Why are these Vessels of Honour rather than the rest, when all were of the *same Clay*, formed by the same hand? *Rom.* 9. 25. There's no Reason can be given, but his *good pleasure*, his meer Grace. And, O what beams of this glorious Grace do break forth from this Consideration! What! must Men be chosen from all other Creatures to be the Object of Gods *peculiar Love?* Will the Lord vouch

vouchsafe the eternal Enjoyment of Himself to none but Men alone of all lapsed Creatures? *Lord! what is Man that thou art mindfull of him, or the Son of Man that thou visitest him!*

And how exceedingly does this endear Free Grace, that any of us should be separated from the rest of perishing Sinners; that we should be Vessels of Mercy, when others are Vessels of Wrath! Lord, what are we, or what are our Fathers? *Why hast thou revealed thy self to us, and not to the World? Even so, Lord, because it pleased thee?* No other Reason can be assigned, but meer Grace. There needs no more, to demonstrate that Salvation is to be ascribed to Grace only.

1 *Use.* This condemns their Doctrine, who will have us saved rather by *Free-Will*, than by *Grace*; which will have the Text inverted, and read thus: *By Free-will are ye saved, not by Grace, but of your selves.*

This has too many Patrons, and those of greatest Name and Ability amongst the Opposers of Truth. It's the capital Errour of the *Remonstrants*, the Foundation of their other Opinions that concern Grace, and with which they all stand or fall.

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The *Socinians*, and the worſt among the Papiſts, the *Jeſuits*, joyn with them, all following *Pelagius*, condemned by the ancient Church as the Enemy of the Grace of Chriſt.

That we may the better underſtand them, and what in them is to be condemned and avoided, let us ſee, (1.) What *Grace they own* and count *ſufficient*: for ſomething they muſt own under this notion, who will not plainly renounce the Goſpel. (2.) What they *aſcribe to Free-will*. (3.) What is the *Tendency of their Principles*. (4.) What they *object* againſt the Doctrine of *Free-Grace*.

I. For the firſt. They count no Grace neceſſary to bring a Sinner into a *ſaving State*, and continue him in it; but that which they call *Morall Grace* or *Swaſion*. This conſiſts in a preſenting of the Object to the Will, with Motives and Arguments to embrace it. Or thus, in a Propoſal of our Duty, with rational Conſiderations to move him to yield to it, leaving us to do as we pleaſe. For Example, To turn from ſin to God, and to Believe in Chriſt, are Duties propounded in the Goſpel; the advantage of yielding hereto, and the danger of refuſing, is there declared;

red; and ſo it is left to the Sinners choice, whether he will comply or no.

This is all the Grace which the Lord affords to ſave us. It amounts to no more than a moral Excitement, or a rational Propoſal. This Propoſal is made with ſome light, tending to excite Affection. If it were altogether in the dark, it would be in effect no Propoſal. Whether this Light be natural, or ſupernatural, they are not agreed. Some, and thoſe moſt followed, would have the Light of natural Reaſon ſufficient. Others would rather have it counted a Light from the Spirit. But all agree, that it is no ſpecial Illumination, but a common Light, vouchſafed to all under the Goſpel; and ſo ſuch as thoſe have, who live and dye in the groſs Darkneſs of Ignorance and Wickedneſs, they muſt not by their Principles deny to Heathens. And thoſe, who will have it called the Light of the Spirit, count it as weak and powerleſs as natural Light, *i. e.* of no more power and efficacy to determine or ſway the Will, than the Light of Reaſon; no, nor ſo much as ſome Dictates of Reaſon are commonly thought to have. The difference is ſo little (if there be any) as to the thing it ſelf, that thoſe who call it the Light of the Spirit, ſeem but to give it

it that Name and Title, to decline the Odium of ascribing nothing at all to the Spirit of Grace. However a common proposal, with such light, made in the Gospel unto Sinners, is all the Grace which they count needful.

1. They deny *eternal Grace*, *i. e.* all Free Mercy in God to any particular persons from Eternity. According to them, he had no Mercy, no purpose of it for any, but what he was obliged to by the foresight of the good use of Free-will. This is no Free Mercy, and so no Grace.

2. They deny all *habitual Grace*, which is not of our selves. They will have no such thing wrought in us by the Spirit of Holiness. All gracious Qualities or Principles, planted in the Heart by the Spirit, they reject under the notion of infused habits.

3. They deny *actual Grace*, *i. e.* any operation of the Spirit to determine the Will. All gracious influences whatever that will or can certainly incline it to act, or incline it any more to act than not to act. Grace, with them, only proposes to the Will, and leaves the determination to it self; it must be left indifferent to act, or not to act, as it likes.

No other Grace, than this of propo-

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ſing; none, habitual or actual, was deſigned for any Perſon in the eternal Counſel of God, or purchaſed for any by the Blood of Chriſt, or adminiſtred to any by the Spirit of Grace. It is enough that it be propounded to the Will to turn to God, and Arguments offered to that purpoſe, ſuch as the Goſpel contains, and are managed in the Miniſtry of it. So that all the Grace, which they count neceſſary, is no ſpecial, ſufficient Grace.

1. It is no *ſpecial*, but only common Grace, afforded equally to thoſe that are damned, as to any that are ſaved. No other Grace, than that which ſuffers the far greateſt part of thoſe who partake of it to periſh eternally. That Grace, wherewith any man may be damned, as ſoon as ſaved. If any be ſaved in their way, it is without ſpecial Grace. It is ten to one, for any Grace the Lord vouchſafes to Sinners, they will never be ſaved.

2. It is not *ſufficient Grace*, unleſs Nature has Power enough for Saving Acts, without the leaſt acceſs of Strength from Grace: for their Grace gives not the leaſt degree of Strength to the Will; but only rouſes its native Power: as *Dalilahs* voice gave *Sampſon* no more ſtrength, when ſhe ſaid,

ſaid, *The Philiſtins are upon thee*, but only excited him to uſe the ſtrength he had. When they will have this ſwaſive Grace to be ſufficient, they commend not Grace at all, but magnifie the Power of Nature, as being great indeed, when it needs ſo little help for Acts of the higheſt quality and importance. If any be ſaved in their way, it muſt be without any Grace ſufficient to Salvation.

3. It is not *effectual Grace*. This is plain by the former. There can be no pretence that that will be effectual which is not ſufficient. But ſuppoſe it were ſufficient, (as they without ground would have it accounted) yet it is not of it ſelf effectual. The Efficacy of it, by their Doctrine, is not from its own Nature and Vertue, nor from the Spirit of Grace, but from the Will of Man. If he will, it is efficacious; if he will not, it is of no Effect. So that, if it ſhould prove Effectual to ſave any; yet that is to be aſcribed to Free Will, and not to Grace; to that which makes it Effectual, when otherwiſe it would be of no effect.

In ſhort, it is not *ſaving Grace*, take it in any of their Senſes. As Saving Grace is peculiar to the ſaved, ſo it is far from being ſaving. In this reſpect it is no

no more saving than damning, if so much, since the most incomparably that have it are damned.

Or if we take *saving Grace* for that which is sufficient for Salvation, it is not saving, unless there be a Power in mans degenerate Nature to save it self; Power enough in the worst for saving acts, such as needs nothing but exciting.

Or if we take it for that which is Effectual to Salvation, it has no such Efficacy from it self or from God; it is only from the Will of man that it is effectual to Salvation, if ever it prove so. So that in their way, either there is no Grace at all that is saving, or none that is saving at a better rate than the Will of man can make it so, when it has no saving vertue of it self, or from God.

There needs no other Arguments against this Doctrine, no Artifice to ingage us against it, but a true and plain discovery of it. If we be saved by Grace, this Doctrine tends to lead us out of the way of Salvation.

II. Let us see what they *ascribe to Free-will.* And that in general is a Power to be willing or unwilling, as to any Motion that is made, any Object that is offered

to it. It has a Power of it ſelf, and by its own natural Conſtitution, either to chooſe or refuſe, either to imbrace or reject whatever Object is propounded, however it be propounded. The Will, they ſay, is never determined *ad unum*, never ſo ſet upon one thing good or bad, but that by rational inducement, *i. e.* by Motives and Arguments, it may be led to the contrary; and never ſo moved by ſuch inducements, but that it may reject the motion. Never ſo ſet upon Sin, but that by ſwaſive Propoſals it may be moved to leave, not only the Acts, but the State of Sin: nor ever ſo moved by that, or any thing elſe, but that it may repell the motion, and quite ſtifle it.

We may view it more diſtinctly in theſe two branches.

(1.) A Power *to chooſe whatever good* is offered. They will have it able of it ſelf to imbrace any good Object of what Nature ſoever; not only natural or moral, but what is ſupernatural, of the higheſt Nature and Quality; and the imbracing of it ſaving, ſuch as will paſs a man into a ſaving State. It has a Power to repent of ſin, to believe in Chriſt, to turn to God, to love, fear and delight in him.

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Not only a capacity, but an active Power for these, *&c.* Only these things must be propounded to it with some clearness and earnestness, as the Gospel propounds them to all under its Ministry. And that such a Proposal is required signifies no inability in the Will it self for these great things: for the most sufficient Faculty imaginable cannot act upon an object that it discovers not; and the Faculty of greatest Power may, in some cases, need exciting. And so it is requisite the will have Light to discover its Object, and some Arguments to commend it, at least when the Soul is under the disadvantage of rooted prejudices, or habitual and inveterate wickedness.

However, all the help they think needfull for the Will, is so far from denying its Power and Sufficiency for those great concerns of Salvation; that it supposes the Will to have it in and of it self, if saving things be but represented to it as necessary and worthy of its choice and embraces.

(2.) A Power *to refuse any Object*, however it be offered, with what advantage soever it be propounded by the Spirit of God, or the Ministry of man. For the Li-

berty, they make eſſential to the Will, conſiſts, they ſay, in an indifferency, either to chooſe or refuſe, either to act or not to act. And it muſt be left indifferent in all caſes; ſo that nothing in Heaven or Earth can determine it, but it ſelf. God himſelf they ſay cannot without fail determine it to the choice of this or the other without deſtroying it. *Voluntas hominis ad actus ſuos motione irreſiſtibili determinari non poteſt ne ab ipſo Deo quidem.* (*Syn. Dor.* 212.) He cannot incline the will irreſiſtably, he cannot by any Divine Motion of unwilling make it willing. Whatever Power he does or can put forth for this purpoſe, the Will may and can reſiſt it and render it of no effect. If the Lord do deſire and intend to Convert a Sinner, and do what can be done by the Power of his Grace in order thereto; yet the Will may hinder him. Take it in their own words, *A man may hinder his own regeneration, when God has a mind to have him regenerated, and it is his will to regenerate him*, Coll. Hag. 282. *Corvinus* (the moſt ſubtile and cautious of their writers) ſays expreſly, *Poſitis omnibus ad agendum requiſitis*, &c. when all the

Vid. *Ames* reſcript. *p.* 129.

Vid. Hickm. *p.* 33.

the Operations of Grace in order to Converſion are paſt upon the Will; yet it is ſtill in the free power of the Will to convert or not to convert it ſelf. So that, when God has done his utmoſt to bring a Sinner into a ſaving State; yet it is in the power of the Will to defeat and hinder him. In plain terms, when God has done what he can, the Will may do what it liſt. They will have the Will to be ſo free, as that it can be under no neceſſity of any ſort, not only ſuch as is natural, or compulſive, or abſolute, which is granted; but ſuch as is only reſpective, and that in reference to God himſelf. So that if it be needfull in reſpect of the Decree and Purpoſe of God, or in reſpect of his Will and Deſire, or in reſpect of his Word and Ingagement, or in reſpect of his Deſign and Intention, that the Will ſhould move this way and not the other; yet it may incline and determin it ſelf the other way; and ſo may act counter to God in theſe his Concerns, defeat him in them all, and carry it againſt him. The Purpoſe, the Promiſe, the Providence, the Grace of God, the Undertaking of Chriſt, the Operations of the Spirit, may be frutrated unavoidably by mans Will. So great

a Power they give it. The Lord ſhall not have his Will, nor make good his Word, nor make his Grace prevalent, nor accompliſh his greateſt Deſigns, if mans Will comply not; and it is never under any neceſſity to comply, but may alwayes reſiſt, when the Lord has done what he can to bring it to a compliance. This is the true Viſage of their Doctrine, if you will ſee it plain and naked. There needs no ill Language to render it ugly.

But as to our preſent Purpoſe. The firſt Branch of this Power, aſcribed to the Will, makes the Grace, which we ſtand in moſt need of, to be needleſs. For if the Will can embrace any Object in order to Salvation, upon a common propoſal; there needs no Strength from Grace to enable it.

The other Branch makes all the Grace they own, to be fruitleſs, of no effect, a meer Cypher, which ſtands for nothing, does, can do nothing but at the diſcretion of Free-will. For the Will, when the Object is propounded, with what advantage ſoever the Propoſal be made, can always reſiſt and reject it utterly. So that the Grace of God comes to nothing, at the meer humour of mans Free-will.

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By the former Branch of the Will's *ſufficiency*, the *Power*, in matters of Salvation, is from Free-will, and not from Grace: for their Grace gives it no Power at all, but ſuppoſes it there already.

By the latter Branch, *the Act*, in the concerns of Salvation, is from the Will, not from Grace: For Grace leaves the Will indifferent to act or not to act; and therefore its acting is no more from Grace than its not acting; its accepting of Chriſt no more from Grace than its rejecting him.

Now if both the Power and the Act, in the concerns of Salvation, be from Free-will, and not from Grace; then it is by Free-will, not by Grace, that we are ſaved.

III. Let us view the *Import* and *dangerous Tendency* of this Doctrine; and then you will ſee ſufficient Reaſon to reject it. Every particular will be an Argument againſt it; and the particulars are very many.

(1.) They make *no Grace needfull*, but what was acknowledged by thoſe Perſons who were condemned by the Ancient Church as Enemies of the Grace of Chriſt. *Pelagius*, the Patriarch of the Aſſerters of Free-will, to the prejudice of Divine Grace,

acknowledged not only a Natural, but a Doctrinal Grace, *viz.* the Word of God discovering and propounding that which is good, and perswading Sinners to embrace it; *Suadet omne quod bonum est*, it perswades to all that is good. Here's the swasive Grace of his Modern followers. Nay, he went further, and not only required an external Proposal of the Object, in the Ministry of the Word; but acknowledged an inward Operation of the Spirit, for inlightning the Mind, and exciting the Affections; *Nos ineffabili dono gratiæ cœlestis illuminat*, He inlightens us with the unspeakable Gift of his heavenly Grace; *futuræ gloriæ magnitudine & præmiorum pollicitatione accendit*: He inflames us with Promise of Rewards and the greatness of the future Glory, and excites the stupid Will, by the Revelation of Wisdom, to Desires after God. Some of his late followers think it not fit to come short of him in this, but seem to require some act of the Spirit to inlighten the Mind, and to stirr up the Affections. But others of them, most applauded and followed, deny all Necessity of any immediate Illumination by the Spirit; and tell us, "That every "one who has the use of Reason, may, "with-

"without any ſpecial inward Light, very "eaſily apprehend whatever in Scripture "is neceſſary to be known or believed. *Epiſcop.* "And that no imme- "diate Operation of the Spi- "rit upon the Mind or Will, "is needful for any one that "he may Believe. *Id.* in *Syn. Dor.* p. 200. So that no Grace is needfull with theſe men, but only an external Propoſal by the Word: for what the Word propounds may, without the Light of the Spirit, be ſufficiently underſtood and offered to the Will: and the Will, they ſay, has unqueſtionably power to embrace whatever is ſo offered by the Underſtanding. If any thing could hinder the Will from embracing the Good propoſed, it muſt be ſome Corruption in mans Soul, ſome ſtrong Prejudices or vicious Habits determining the Will unavoidably to that which is evil: but no ſuch thing can be admitted, as they ſtate the Wills liberty. For, as no power of Grace, no Operation of the Spirit can determine the Will irreſiſtibly to that which is good, but when it has done its utmoſt, the Will remains free to the contrary evil: ſo no power of Corruption can determin the Will to any evil, but

De Perſpicuit. Script. theſ. 1. & 3.

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it will remain free to chooſe the contrary good propounded to it.

The Will of fallen Man, notwithſtanding any ſuppoſed Corruption in the Soul native or acquired, ſtill retains its primitive Power intire; only it is under ſome Impediment as to the Exerciſe of it, there is one thing wanting which hinders it from acting, it cannot act without an Object. And this ſignifies no defect or weakneſs in the Will: for the moſt perfect Faculty of Man or Angel in Heaven muſt have an Object that it may act. Now the Object is offered in the Goſpel, and the Propoſal of the Object by the Goſpel, with the Motives and Arguments there contained, is all the Grace, all the ſupernatural Aid and divine Aſſiſtances, which they think requiſite to help the Will, to believe and turn to God. This is to aſcribe leſs to Grace than the old *Pelagians* did, who yet were branded by the Church as the capital Enemies of ſupernatural Grace, and upon that account ſcarce thought worthy to be called Chriſtians.

(2.) By their Doctrine, *Grace is given according to Merit.* This was the moſt leprous part of *Pelagianiſm*, which the ancient Church had in greateſt deteſtation and

and for which *Pelagius* himſelf had been Anathematized, branded with the higheſt Cenſure, by a Synod in *Paleſtin*, but that he pretended to renounce it.

Yet Merit, in the ſenſe of that Age, was a far leſs thing, and much more tolerable than the *Papiſts* merit of Condignity. It was not only a good work, of ſuch value and worth in it ſelf, as that a Reward ſhould be due to it in Juſtice; but Merit, as they underſtood it, was any good act which a man did of himſelf, upon the account of which Grace was vouchſafed. This *Bellarmin* himſelf acknowledges, however he was concerned to deny it. "The "Fathers (ſays he) underſtood Grace to "be given according to Merit, when any "thing is done by our own "ſtrength, in reſpect whereof "Grace is given, altho' it be no "Merit of Condignity. *De Grat. & libr. arbit. l. 6. c. 5.*

And in this ſence of *Merit*, the modern Aſſerters of Free-will would have all Grace given, according to Merit. How univerſal ſoever they make Grace to be, yet no man ſhall have it unleſs he merit it. That Grace may be Univerſal, they will have it communicated both to thoſe that are without the Goſpel, and to thoſe that enjoy

joy it. For thoſe who have not the Goſpel, he is ready to give all of them the Grace of the Goſpel, if they will uſe the Light of Nature well; and he does give it actually to thoſe, who by the good uſe of their Free-will, make ſuch an improvement of natural Light. Here the good uſe of natural Light is a good act; and upon the account of that, the Grace of the Goſpel is given, *i. e.* this Grace is given according to Merit, in the ſenſe of the Fathers, who counted it ſo execrable to have it given according to Merit. *Thoſe* (ſay the Remonſtrants) *whom God calleth, and to whom he does vouchſafe the Grace of Preaching, we confeſs, for the moſt part, to be ſuch men, that their Vertues do deſerve no leſs.* Epiſt. contr. Walach. p. 44.

For thoſe who have the Goſpel, God is ready to give further Grace to them, if they would be worthy Hearers, as they may be, if they would uſe their Free-will well in hearing. "But there are ſome "worthy hearers of the Goſpel, and ſome "unworthy, ſays *Corvinus*; and ſufficient "Grace is not given to all promiſcuouſly "who hear, *ſed iis qui digni ſunt* In *Twiſs.* 387. "*evangelii auditores*, but to thoſe "who are worthy hearers. Which

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is in effect, as tho' he ſpoke out, and ſaid, It is given according to Merit, which is all point blank againſt the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 3. 4.

This they extend to the *Fountain* of all, the *eternal Purpoſe* of God. All the Grace, which is comprized in the Election of Grace, will be ordered according to Merit. Election of particular Perſons depends upon their Faith or Works foreſeen. The Lord foreſees who will believe, and becauſe they will believe, upon the account of this good act he does elect them; ſo they are elected according to Merit. But does he not purpoſe from Eternity to give Faith in time? No, by no means; for if he had decreed this, they would be under ſome Neceſſity to believe; and ſuch Neceſſity is not conſiſtent with the Liberty of mans Will. Therefore it muſt be left to their Free-will whether they ſhall believe or no: and when God foreſees that they ſhall make ſo good uſe of their Free-will as to believe, then upon that account he elects them. In plain Engliſh, he chooſes thoſe, whom he foreſees will merit the Election of Grace by the good uſe of Free-will.

Nay, all the Grace, in the great and preci-

precious Promiſes, and in the whole Covenant of Grace, will be according to Merit. For they will have the accompliſhment of all ſuſpended upon ſome Condition; ſuch a condition, as is to be performed meerly by the power of Free-will, aſſiſted by no Grace at all, but that gentle excitement which they call *Swaſion*, which enables not the Will to perform the Condition, but plainly ſpeaks it able before hand. Such a condition performed is indeed a Cauſe, a moving and engaging Cauſe, and no leſs Merit, than that which the ancient Church condemned in *Pelagius*. For it is a good Act performed by our own ſtrength, upon the account of which the Grace of the Covenant is vouchſafed, which a *Jeſuit* will not deny to be the Merit that is under the Curſe and Execration of Synods and Fathers twelve hundred years agoe. Their other Principles overthrow the Grace of God, and lay it proſtrate; but this quite deſtroyes it, and makes it no Grace, if the Apoſtles arguing be good Reaſon, *Rom.* 11. 6.

(3.) This Doctrine (which owns no more Grace, and aſcribes ſo much to Free-will) makes God not to be the worker or real Cauſe of the ſpiritual and ſaving bleſſings

bleſſings of Converſion and Regeneration, nor the Author and Giver of Faith, Repentance, Holineſs. Theſe are rather to be aſcribed to Man, than unto God. This will appear,

1. In *general.* Converſion, Regeneration, Sanctification, Perſeverance, and what elſe of this nature is required to our Salvation, is to be attributed to a mans ſelf, more than the Spirit of Grace; they are the Effects and Atchievements of Free-will, rather than of Grace.

A man Converts and quickens himſelf, Regenerates and begets himſelf, Creates himſelf ſo far as he is a New Creature, and upholds himſelf when he is created. This ſeems ſtrange and uncouth (not to ſay abſurd and horrid); but there is plain Reaſon for it, ſuch as may convince any who will yield to evident Reaſon.

Grace, however conſidered, (either in *Election*, or *Redemption*, or the *Holy Spirits Operations*) does no more for the quickening and Regenerating of thoſe who are converted, than it does for thoſe who are never converted; therefore it is not Grace, but ſomething elſe, that does the work. If the Lord had done no more for the making of this World, than for making

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of other Worlds that were never made, the Creation of the World could never have been ascribed to him. If Christ had done no more to raise *Lazarus* from the dead, than he did to raise others who continued dead in their Graves, he could not have been said to raise him to Life. He that does no more towards the effecting of a thing, than when it is not done at all, he cannot be said to do it. Now Grace does no more for the quickening of those that are alive to God, than for those who are still dead and will be so for ever. Therefore it is not Grace that does the work; it must be ascribed to something else, not to the Spirit of Grace, but to a mans self, and his own Free-will.

This is evident in the Nature, visible in the very Complexion of their *Moral Grace*. This (which is all the Grace they own) consists in Swasive Proposals. Now he that only perswades or propounds the doing of a thing, does not thereby do it at all, but would have you to do it your selves, and supposes you can if you will. So that this is the plain Import of their Doctrine, that men can convert and quicken themselves, and do it if it be done. However any be said to be *born of God*, yet

yet they may beget themſelves. However they be ſaid to be *the Lords Workmanſhip, created of Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, ver.* 10. yet they are their own Workmanſhip, and make themſelves new Creatures. However the Apoſtle ſaith, *ver.* 1. *You hath he quickned*, yet indeed they raiſe themſelves to life. And ſince they do it themſelves, to themſelves they may in all reaſon aſcribe it, and accordingly glory in it. The Crown is not to be caſt at the feet of him who ſits on the Throne. Grace is to have neither Throne nor Crown; that is to have the Crown which does the work; Free-will does it, and this muſt wear it.

2. More *particularly*, it is manifeſt, that they make not God to be the *real cauſe* of thoſe *ſaving works*, or the giver of thoſe Spiritual Bleſſings; becauſe by their Doctrine neither the Power nor the Act can be aſcribed to him: For they ſay he does nothing to this purpoſe but by vertue of Moral Grace: And it is evident, that this, or He by this, gives neither the Power nor the Act, *&c.*

(1.) *Swaſive Grace*, or the Lord by ſwaſive Propoſals, gives no man power to believe or turn to God; it rather ſuppoſes

that he has it already before or without this Grace. The vertue of it (of all the Grace they own) is only that of Advice or Suaſion; and no man reaſonably perſwades or adviſes another to be able, but only to be willing to uſe what already he has. He that holds forth a Light to a Man lying on the ground, and moves him with Arguments to riſe and walk, does not thereby give him Legs and Strength, but ſuppoſes he has theſe already, if he would uſe them. He that only ſhews another what he has to doe, and offers reaſon to perſwade him to do it, not taking any other courſe to ſtrengthen him for it, takes it for granted that he is afore-hand able for it. Now this is all that their Moral Grace pretends to; it ſhews the Sinner that it is his Duty to turn to God, &c. and uſes Arguments to move him to it, but gives no other ſtrength for it than what this Advice includes, which as Perſwaſion or Advice does indeed give none at all, but plainly ſuppoſes it in being. They ſay, a Sinner, under the Influence of this Moral Grace, is able to Convert and Regenerate himſelf, to beget himſelf to a New Life. But if he be able, his Ability is from Nature; and the Power

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of his natural Faculties was not from Grace, seeing this their Grace is not for the giving of Ability where it is not, but only for exciting it where it is before.

(2.) As *the Power* for these great Concerns of Salvation is not from God or his Grace, so neither is *the Act* from him. For, 1. That which gives or works the Act, *determins the Will*, or causes it to determin it self; but the Lord by this Grace (which is all they own) brings it only to the Wills choice, and leaves it to do as it list, and so plainly leaves the Act to it self; so that if the Soul do actually Believe, or Repent, or turn to God, this is of it self: their Grace leaves the Will indifferent to act or not to act, and so no more works the one than the other, and is no more the Cause that it acts, than that it acts not. It leaves it to the Will, either to yield or refuse; if it yield, it is not from Grace, but the Will. Grace leaves it in the Power of the Will to resist; if it resist not, it is from the Will, not from Grace. The Lord by his Power works not the Will to turn to God, to love, to embrace Christ, to yield to the Spirit; but leaves it indifferent to

turn to God or againſt him, to love God or to hate him, to embrace Chriſt or reject him, to yield to the Spirit or reſiſt him. It muſt be left indifferent as to either, Grace turns not the Scales, but leaves the Will at an equal poiſe, that the Will of Man, not the Grace of God, may have the caſting weight; if Grace ſhould weigh it down, the Liberty of the Will, they ſay, would be violated, and its Nature deſtroyed.

(3.) Nay, their Grace is ſo far from working the Will to actual Faith or Holineſs, that by their account it ſeems to *lead a man into Sin*, and *leave* him in it: for it is a Sin for a man to be Indifferent whether he Believe or Believe not, whether he accept Chriſt or reject him, whether he love or hate him: But all that this Grace does to the Will, is to bring it to ſuch an Indifferency; and ſo the Grace of God with them does no other, no better Office for a Sinner, than to bring his Soul into a wicked Poſture; and in that Poſture it does and muſt leave the Will to it ſelf; and there left, if the Will be no better to it ſelf than Grace is, or can be, it ſhall never come into a better Poſture.

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Nay further, the Lord is ſo far from Determining the Will, and ſo from cauſing the Act by making it willing; that it is *impoſſible* for him to do it. They ſay (as was ſhewed before) that the Will cannot be determined by God himſelf without deſtroying it; they will have it an Inconſiſtency, and to imply a Contradiction. And thus the Lord is ſo far from being the Worker or real Cauſe of actual Faith, Converſion, Sanctification, that it is impoſſible he ſhould be the Cauſe thereof; he is ſo far from actually working theſe, that he cannot do it.

Let me but add one Argument more. This Grace is given *equally to all*, and effects no more in one than another; and therefore can be no more the Cauſe of actual Converſion in thoſe that turn to God, than in thoſe that are never converted; works Regeneration no more in thoſe that are ſanctified, than in the unregenerate; *i. e.* works it not at all, is no Cauſe of it. The Lord, by vertue of this Grace, gives actual Faith and Repentance no more to thoſe that Believe and Repent, than to ſuch as perſevere in Impenitency and Unbelief: gave Faith no more to *Paul* than to *Judas*, Repentance no

more to *Peter* than to *Simon Magus*; *i. e.* he gives it not at all.

This is the clear *consequence* of their Doctrine. The Lord is not the *Author* and *Finisher* of our Faith, or of our Repentance; nor the real Cause of Conversion or Sanctification, and other saving Blessings; and so, not the Author of Salvation. It is not *by his Grace*, but of *our selves*, both as to the Power and the Act, in direct opposition to the Text and the whole strain of the Gospel. And it is as reconcileable with Scripture and the Perfections of God, to say he is not the Creator of the World, or the Author of any thing; as to say he is not the Author or real Cause of those great Concerns of Salvation.

(4.) This leads them to deny *Original Sin.* They must of necessity make little or nothing of the Corruption of our Nature, since they will have their Swasive Grace to be a sufficient Relief against it; as if all the Sin in mans Nature could be argued out of him without more adoe, and all the Power of Corruption, natural and contracted too, might be effectually subdued and crucified by rational Advice; whereas this Moral Swasion is of it self of

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no Efficacy at all for this purpoſe, and appears to be ſo in that it effects no ſuch thing in far the greateſt part of thoſe who partake of it as much as any, but leaves them altogether as corrupt as it found them.

I cannot diſcern, that they will acknowledge any corruption at all to be in the Will, tho Scripture and Experience ſhew that it is moſt of all there. The Will ſeems to be now as ſound (by their Doctrine) as it was in Innocency; nor ſtands it in need of more help by Grace, than *Adam* before the Fall: for then he had and needed Swaſive Grace. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt dye*: Here is the Duty propounded, and the Propoſal inforced with a powerful Motive by God himſelf; that is the ſum of Swaſive Grace, which the Lord ſeeing needfull for our firſt Parents, did thus adminiſter it, as far from Corruption as it was then. And if the Will need no more now, it is as free from Corruption as it was then. Thus for the Affections, there muſt be no more Corruption in them than in the Will, theſe being but the Acts and Motions of it. Or, if they will conſider them as in the Senſitive Appetite; yet

common Illumination is enough to heal it there: for thereby the Affections are ſufficiently excited and quickened. Nor is there any Depravation in the Mind, but what may be cured by common Light, ſuch as the moſt corrupt and wicked men have.

That which admits ſo eaſie a Cure muſt needs be ſleight and little; and that little too, which they acknowledge, is with them neither Sin nor Puniſhment properly, and ſo not evil at all, unleſs there be ſome evil which is neither. The Depravation of our Natures by the Fall, however it be aggravated in Scripture, is not in their account properly either our Sin or our Puniſhment; but only our Infelicity; and no great Infelicity neither, ſince with them it can be neither ſpiritual Death, nor mortal Diſeaſe, no nor very conſiderable Weakneſs. For if it were ſuch a Weakneſs, no Grace would repair it but that which communicates an anſwerable Strength. But that Grace which they think ſufficient to repair all, gives not any ſtrength at all, but ſuppoſes there is Power enough in Nature to Recover it ſelf, if it be but excited.

This in a manner makes Chriſt of none effect,

effect. The great end of his coming was to Reſtore our Natures fallen from God, and made uncapable of honouring and injoying him: Therefore he took our Nature, and performed and ſuffered ſo much therein. But what need all this waſte, if we can lick our ſelves whole by vertue of a little common Light? and ſo little not needfull with ſome of them.

The great *Auguſtin* reduces the whole Chriſtian Doctrine to two Heads, the Knowledge of the *firſt Adam*, and the Knowledge of the *Second*: What we ſuffered by *Adam*, and what we gained by *Chriſt*. But tho theſe be Fundamental in the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, how little they ſtand for in the Doctrine of *Free-will*, we may hereby perceive. And it will be further manifeſt by another Fundamental, which, depending on this now inſiſted on, falls with it. *De Pecat. Orig. c. 14.*

(5.) By this Doctrine there is no need of *Regeneration*. To be Regenerate, is in the Language of the Holy Ghoſt to be *born of God*, *Joh.* 1. 13. to be *born again*, or *born from above*, *Joh.* 3. 3. and that is to receive a Principle of Spiritual Life and Motion from God. *Vid. Ham.* in *Joh.* 1. 13. But no ſuch Principle is neceſſary in

in the Will, which indeed moſt needs it. But no Habit of Holineſs is planted there, no good Quality created in it by the Spirit; that they ſay is a neceſſitating Act, and would be prejudicial to its Liberty. The Image of God needs no repairing in the Heart or Will, tho' that be the chief Receptacle and Subject of it; even the Schoolmen making this the principal Seat of all Vertues. It needs no ſuch infuſed Principle or Quality, to incline it to that which is good; they will have it able of it ſelf, by its own native Power, to embrace any good, how ſupernatural ſoever, which the Mind offers to it. It can produce the beſt Acts, without any inward Principle ſuitable or proportionable to them. The Tree need not be good, that the Fruit may be good; or rather, it is good enough already, it is ſo naturally. The Will or Heart of Man (how naught ſoever the Scripture ſpeaks it, repreſenting it to be *deſperately wicked*, *Jer.* 17. 9. and the *Fountain* of all Wickedneſs, *Mat.* 15. 19.) ſeems by their Doctrine to be as good by Nature, as God can or will make it; no worſe than it was when firſt formed. It loſt no ſpiritual Qualities or Accompliſhments by the Fall

Fall: for it had none before. So that all regenerating Grace as to the Will is clearly cashiered. Nor will they allow any new Qualities to be infused by the Spirit of Grace into the Mind or Affections, no more than into the Will: for that they say is repugnant to the administration of the Means of Salvation. All that they think requisite, is common Light, such as they deny not to the vilest men (nor can well deny to Devils: for they discern the truth and goodness of what is propoſed in the Gospel); by the bare help of such Light, their own Wills can regenerate them, so far as they think any Regeneration needfull. I find it no easie thing to discern what their Regeneration is. The best I can make of it is this. The Mind needs no new Birth or Life, but what it has from common Light; nor do the Affections need any exciting or quickening but what that same effects. But tho they count this sufficient quickening, they do not call it Regeneration: for many, thus quickened, do live and dye unregenerate. It is an act of the Will must do the work, and for that

Collat. Hag. p. 248. *In spirituali morte non separantur propriè dona spiritualia ab hominis voluntate, &c.*

Syn. Dor. 196.

that the Will must be left to it self. The Spirit of God must not touch it, must not give it any Principle of Life, must not act it by any special or immediate Influence; but if of its own accord it turn it self to that which is good, the Sinner is thereby born again. So that Regeneration is compleated by a little common Light, such as the Children of Darkness have, and an act of Free-will, without any further assistance, any other work of the Spirit in or upon it.

Thus, by this one act of Free-will at first, they are regenerated *actually*; and afterwards, by repeated acts of Free-will, they may be regenerated *habitually*: for the Will, by repeated Acts, can beget gracious Habits, and so help them to habitual Regeneration; tho they deny the Spirit of Grace can work in them any such thing as Habits or Principles of Holiness. Now, this is to be *born again of the Will of Man*, not *of the Will of God*, *Joh.* 1. 13. The Scripture declares, that they who are Regenerate, are *born of God*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 8. but this is to be born of Free-will, not of God, nor of the Spirit, unless Free-will be God or the Spirit. The Apostle says, *of his own*

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Will begat he us, Jam. 1. 18. but they muſt ſay, Of their own Wills they beget themſelves. Yet, this is all the Regeneration which they count neceſſary, and ſo make that New-birth a needleſs thing, which the Scripture calls for and deſcribes by other Characters, and declares all acceſs to the Kingdom of Heaven impoſſible without it.

(6.) This takes Sinners off from that which is *really ſaving*, and leads them to take up with that which falls ſhort of Salvation. It teaches them to reſt ſatisfied with ſuch a Faith, a Repentance, a Converſion, a Regeneration, as common Light and rational Propoſals (ſuch as every one meets with in the Miniſtry of the Word) are ſufficient to effect. But theſe alone can never produce any ſaving Faith or Repentance, any ſaving Regeneration or Converſion

Thoſe who perſwade them, that this is enough for thoſe ſaving Effects, go about to delude Sinners; and if they look after no more, their Souls are like to be ruined for ever. Moral Grace may perhaps prevail for ſome Morality; but this alone can never be effectual, to turn a *Heart of ſtone* into a *Heart of fleſh*, to turn the Enmity

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of the Will into Love to Christ, to turn Sinners from the Power of Satan unto God, to raise the Soul to Life that is spiritually dead, to make them new Creatures, *&c.* These are not the Effects of a gentle Swasion, but of an Almighty Power. They mean something else than Scripture intends by these Expressions, who make these saving works so low, common and easie things, and so much in the Power, and at the beck of a Sinners corrupted Will. Nothing more ruines Souls, than resting in that *as saving* which is not so; and when Divines promote the Delusion how pernicious is it like to prove?

(7.) It destroyes *holy Obedience*, inward and outward. Leaves no place for the exercise of Grace in the Heart, or work truely good in the Conversation. It pluck up these by the roots, taking away the bitual Regeneration which is the root of them, the exercise of Grace in the action of an inward gracious Principle; but they say there is no such Principle planted in the Heart or Will by the Spirit of Holiness; and where the Principle is not, it cannot be acted. There can be no vital Acts, where there is no vital Principle; that which is not alive, cannot put forth

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Acts of life. Or, to uſe the terms where-in Chriſt expreſſes it, *the Fruit is not good, unleſs the Tree be good.* No good Acts can be produced by the Heart or Will, till it ſelf be good. It is not, it cannot be good, when there are no good Qualities in it. It has no good, no holy Qualities planted in it by the Spirit of Grace; that, (with them) only acts Morally, and does no more ſanctifie thoſe that are holy, than thoſe that are profane. So that, if the Will have any goodneſs, any thing that is holy in it; it has it from it ſelf, not from the Spirit of Holineſs. Thus the Fruits of the Spirit will be no other, than the Fruits of Free-will; of Free-will unſanctified, unleſs it ſanctifie it ſelf: and the acts of Obedience will be no other, than the acts of natural Morality, ſuch as Mans degenerate Will can produce by its natural Power, without any aſſiſtance, but that of Moral or ſwaſive Grace; which begets no good Qualities, gives no inward ſtrength, affords no help of any kind, more to thoſe who do moſt, than to thoſe who do nothing at all.

We need not wonder, if thoſe of this Perſwaſion ſhould ſatisfie themſelves, and would have others ſatisfied with ſuch a Morali-

Morality; their Principles do afford, and can require nothing better. But whether the Acts of it be thoſe gracious Acts, thoſe Fruits of the Spirit, thoſe good works, which the Scripture ſo much calls for, and makes the Way to Salvation; let thoſe conſider who are concerned indeed in the Way to Salvation.

They charge their Oppoſers, for not preſſing Moral Duties. If they mean thereby Practical Chriſtianity, there are none in the World preſs it more. But we are not for a Pagan, but a Chriſtian Morality; and think it not adviſeable to preſs external Acts alone, without minding the Principle and Root, from whence all that is truely Chriſtian muſt ſpring. We count it abſurd and prepoſterous to look for Fruits where there is no Root, for gracious Acts where Grace is not planted in the Heart. They may deck a May-pole with as many Garlands as they pleaſe, and ſet off a Maſt with Flags and Streamers; but they will never thereby make them Fruit-trees. The Lord will condemn thoſe who bring not forth good Fruit; and thoſe alſo who lead them in a way, where they are never like to be truely fruitfull, without better conduct.

(8.) This

(8.) This *ſtifles Love to God*, takes away that which is the Foundation and Ground of a ſpecial tranſcendent Love to him. That which is the riſe of our Love to God, is *his Love to us*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. it is this that kindles our Affection to him, and raiſes Love into a Flame: But he that believes and conſiders, that God had no more thoughts of Love for him from Eternity, than he had for thoſe who are under his everlaſting Hatred; and that Chriſt had no more Love for him in the work of Redemption; did Obey, Suffer, Satisfie, Purchaſe no more for him, than he did for thoſe who were in Hell, when he Suffered; and that the Spirit of Grace does no more for him, in order to his Salvation, than he does for the Veſſels of Wrath, fitted for Deſtruction; will ſcarce find any thing in the Love of God (on this Conſideration) to engage his Soul to a ſpecial Love for God: He will be in danger to Love God with no more than a common Love, ſuch as a carnal Man may have; who believes that the Lord loves him no more, than he loves thoſe who are to be tormented for ever with the Devil and his Angels. He will find a Motive from hence, to hug and love

himſelf rather than God: For, when that which they call Love in God, ſeems but an indifferent reſpect, not intending more good to one than another, but as themſelves determine it; he had got no ſpecial benefit, no particular advantage by that Love, if he had not been better to himſelf: The Lord, as they repreſent him, (whatever is pretended concerning the greatneſs and univerſality of his Love to Mankind) ſeems indifferent as to Love or Hatred, as to the Happineſs or Miſery of Man. The Lord left it indifferent, in his eternal Purpoſe, whether any ſhould be Saved or no; and Chriſt, in the Work of Redemption, left it indifferent whether any ſhould be actually Redeemed or no; and the Spirit, in Calling Sinners, leaves it indifferent whether any be effectually Called or no: There was no Affection in all this, but what might have ended in Love or Hatred, *i. e.* in the Damning of all, as ſoon as the Saving of any. That which determines this indifference, and makes it prove Love, is the Sinner himſelf, the good uſe of his Free-will: Had it not been for this, for any Love that God had for him, for any expreſſion of it from Father, Son, or Spirit, he had been

been one of the Children of Wrath, in the ſame Condemnation with others. So that the plain tendency of their Doctrine, is to lead Sinners to reflect affectionately on themſelves, but with Indifferency upon God.

Such is the *general Love* which they will have in God to Mankind; it is but an indifferent reſpect to all; which proves Love or Hatred, as the Sinners Will determines it. But when they aſcribe any particular Love to God, it is no other than what ariſes from the Sinners Love to him: He foreſaw that we would believe, and ſo love him, and therefore he intended Life for us: He foreſaw that we would embrace and chooſe Chriſt, and therefore did he chooſe us. So that God did not *Love us firſt*, but we him, whatever the Apoſtle ſays, 1 *Joh.* 4. 10, 19. He did not *Chooſe us firſt*, but we did Chooſe him, whatever Chriſt ſays, *Joh.* 15. 16. Thus they ſtop up the Spring of our Love to God, they deſtroy the reaſon, and raze the ground of our Love to him, if that be it which the Apoſtle aſſigns. It is the greatneſs, the riches, the freeneſs of Divine Love that ingages, that conſtrains us to Love him: But this Do-

ctrine not only defaces the Riches and Freeneſs, but in a manner takes away the true Naure and Notion of his Love, when it makes it an Affection ſo indifferent to Mans Happineſs or Miſery.

(9.) It *deſtroys the Exerciſe of Faith*, and takes them off from a continued dependance on God, and truſting in him. It is inconſiſtent with that Life of Faith, which muſt be the Life of every Chriſtian.

This takes them off from depending on God, both in their *ſpiritual* Concerns, and in common and *humane* Affairs.

1. For *thoſe Affairs* which depend on the *Wills of other Men:* They cannot depend on God for the ordering of them; for none are to depend on him for things which are not at his diſpoſal: But the Wills of Men, and ſo the Affairs which depend thereon, are not (with them) at Gods diſpoſal; ſince, by their Principles, he cannot ſway their Wills effectually one way or other; for this, in their Account, is to deſtroy their natural Liberty.

2. As to *ſpiritual Concerns*, for the making of Grace, or the means of Grace effectual. For the Promoting of Holineſs, for the Growth or Exerciſe of it, or for Per-

Perſeverance in it, there is no need to depend on God: For it is not neceſſary to depend on another for that which is in his own Power. Now theſe things, and the like, are in the Power of his own Will; he is the Maſter of them, if he will not be wanting to himſelf. Indeed it is more in their own Power, than in the Power of God; for every Mans Will can determine it ſelf to theſe things, but God cannot, without deſtroying the Will: For if he determine it, he leaves it not indifferent; and if it be not indifferent, it is not free; and if it be not free, it is not an humane Will: And therefore they have more reaſon to depend on themſelves, where they believe the Power is, than on God, where they ſay it is not. If there be any reaſon to rely on God, it is for further continuance of that which they call ſufficient Grace: But there is no more need to depend on him for this, than the other; for this is never withdrawn, unleſs they be contumacious, and obſtinately reſiſt it: But then it is in their Power not to reſiſt, but comply with it; and if they will not, God cannot help it: For when he has put forth all the Operations of his Grace upon the Soul, the Will is at li-

berty, and has Power to do as it list. The Power is most in Man still; and where the Power is, there must be the Dependance, upon themselves rather than upon God; though this Self-dependance be under the Curse of God in Scripture, and plainly deserves his heavyest Curse.

(10.) It *overthrows Humility and Self-denial*. One may smell from whence it comes, by the rank Tendency of it to Pride and Self-exaltation. The design of the Gospel is clearly to debase man, and take from him all occasion of Boasting or Glorying in himself; or of ascribing the Praise, either of his State or Actions, to himself, *Rom.* 3. 9, 27. 1 *Cor.* 1. 29, 30. But this Doctrine obliges a Believer to ascribe the difference, which is betwixt him and others who are in the State of Sin and Misery, not unto Grace, but to himself; leaves him no ground to imagine that it was Grace which made the difference.

Grace is, with them, indifferently afforded unto all Sinners under the Gospel at least. Others had the same Light, the same rational Proposals, with as much Clearness and Earnestness, in the same Degree, and of no less Power and sufficiency;

ciency; it is common in all reſpects. That which is every way common and indifferent, could not poſſibly make us to differ. But when they had it in common, this man would make good uſe of it, without any other help from Grace than the reſt had; they would not. His Will complyed with the Propoſal; their Wills, no leſs aſſiſted than his, reſiſted. Grace brought it equally to the choice of their Wills, and there left it: His Will determined it ſelf to comply; their Wills determined againſt it: that made the difference, not Grace, which was alike in all; but Free-will, which he uſed better than Others. If my Will (may he ſay) had not been better to me than Grace, it had been as bad with me as them: For Grace was as good to them as me. The Apoſtle asks, *Who made thee to differ?* 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. ſuppoſing none would have the Confidence to arrogate this to himſelf. But he that is for Free-will muſt ſay, *I made my ſelf to differ.* Grace brought it to the choice of my Will, whether there ſhould be any difference or no; it does no more for any; if there be any difference made, it is Free-will that makes it. Thoſe of them that are ſo in-

genuous as to uſe plain dealing, ſpeak out, and ſay expreſly, *Ego me diſcerno*, I make the difference my ſelf.

The Apoſtle ſays, *By the Grace of God I am what I am*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. but they muſt ſay, *By the good uſe of Free-will I am what I am:* For Grace is ſuch a thing (with them) as moves all, affects all, leaves all alike: If any one be better than another, as to ſtate or actings, it is not Grace that makes him ſo, for the worſt have as much of their Grace as the beſt; the difference muſt be aſcribed to Free-will. Nor can their Doctrine ſhew them any Reaſon, why they ſhould not aſcribe it to themſelves, and glory in it, whatever become of the Glory of Divine Grace.

(11.) It makes it *Unneceſſary or Unreaſonable, to Pray for themſelves or others*, for thoſe things which we ſhould moſt of all Pray for: This is evident enough, in that it leaves not place for Faith and Dependance on God, in common Affairs, or ſpiritual Concerns, as was ſhewed before. For we are not to Pray to God, but where we may rely and depend on him; nor ſeek him for what we may not truſt him, *Rom.* 10. 14. But further, the

the things that Christians are principally to Pray for, are spiritual and heavenly Blessings; these are all comprized in, or depend upon Grace. Let us see how favourable their Principles are to Praying for Grace, either effectual or preventing.

As to the former, they need not Pray for Efficacious Grace, for it is in their own Power to make it effectual; and who needs beg that of another, which he has in his own Power? Their Grace is effectual in the Soul, when it becomes willing, (for then it has its effect;) but with them, nothing is more in their Power and Will, than to be willing: And it is needless and senseless to Pray to God to make them willing, *i. e.* to make Grace effectual, when they can do it well enough of themselves: *Quid est stultius, quam ora-re ut facias quod in potestate habes?* What more foolish, than to Pray God thou mayest do that which thou hast in thine own Power? And elsewhere, *Ne fallamus homines*, &c. Let us not deceive Men, for we cannot deceive God: We Pray not to God at all, but only feign that we Pray, if we think that our selves, not He, doth what we Pray for. *August.* de Nat. & Grat. *c.* 18.

And as they need not, so they must not Pray,

Pray, that God would make Grace effectual, or make it work effectually in them for God cannot do it, and they muſt not ſeek that of him which he cannot do. To make Grace effectual, is of unwilling to make them willing, to determine the Will to what he Propoſes; but this (they ſay) he cannot do, without invading its freedom: All that he can do, is to Propoſe, and leave the Will to do as it likes; if he ſhould bow it effectually one way or other, that would be a breach upon the liberty which is eſſential to it; ſo that to beg this of him, would be to ſeek an impoſſibility. So that, unleſs they will be abſurd, they muſt not Pray that God would effectually bow or incline their Wills, to believe in Chriſt, to turn to God, to love him, to fear him, to walk in his ways, to hate Sin, or mortifie it; yea, or to avoid it. They muſt not Pray, that God would effectually ſubdue their Wills to his Will in any thing: For, to be ſo ſubjected, though to God, and by a Divine Motion, is not conſiſtent with that Freedom which the Nature of the Will requires.

If their Petitions be of ſuch Import, (as the beſt Petitions of Chriſtians are) they

Praye

Prayers contradict their Principles; their Prayers are a Plea for the Truth which they diſpute againſt. Whatever they argue with Men, yet they muſt be for us, when they have to do with God, if they will have any thing to do with God in Prayer, or Pray any thing like Chriſtians.

As for preventing or ſufficient Grace, they need not Pray for that; for they have it already, or they will have it, thô they Pray not for it; for all have it, even thoſe who never Pray while they live.

But if they ſhould Pray for it, their Petitions muſt bear ſuch a ſence as will be very harſh to any Chriſtian or rational Ear. Sufficient Grace is that which enables a Man to turn to God if he will. So, this muſt be it they Pray for: Lord, give me ſuch Grace, that I may Love thee if I will, that I may Fear thee if I will, that I may Obey thee if I pleaſe. This Grace leaves, and muſt leave the Will indifferent, to chooſe or refuſe, to act or not to act, at its Pleaſure: For ſo far the Lord may by his Grace proceed with the Will, but no farther, without intrenching on its Liberty: So that it is this which they Pray for; Lord, give me ſuch Grace, as will

will leave me Indifferent, either to Lo
or Hate thee; either to Turn or not
Turn unto thee; to Obey or Rebell again
thee; either to Believe in Christ, or to
an Unbeliever: This must be the Impo
of their Prayers for Grace, if they
consistent with their Principles: But
they will Pray with the sense of Chr
stians or sober Men, they must renoun
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Further, They must not Pray for othe
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Persecute, Obstruct the Gospel, Oppo
Christs Interest. They must not Pray f
Children, Friends, Strangers; that G
would effectually Turn them to himse
that he would Create in them new Hear
or Inspire their Wills with gracious Pri
ciples; that he would conquer their r
bellious Wills, or not leave them in a c
pacity to resist him, or reject the Spir
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any Grace, but what will leave it at t
choice and arbitrement of their ow
Wills (when there is no good Qualit
in them) as well to resist as not to r

ſt Grace, before Converſion; as well to xpel as to retain it, after Converſion.

Prayer is ſuch an acknowledgment of od, ſo eſſential to all Religion, that with-ut it there can be no Religion, either hriſtian or Natural; therefore ſo far as his Doctrine makes it unneceſſary or un-eaſonable to Pray, ſo far it tends to ex-irpate all Religion.

(12.) It is inconſiſtent with *that Thank-ulneſs* and *Gratitude* which ſhould make p the Life of a Chriſtian; with thoſe raiſes, whereby God is glorified in a pecial manner, and which muſt be the mployment of Eternity. It is the moſt ngrateful Doctrine that ever any under he Name of Chriſtians entertained: For ereby, he that is in the ſtate of Grace, as no more Cauſe on that account to e thankful to God, than he that is in he ſtate of Sin and Damnation: For he s not obliged to be thankful for more han he has received; and the beſt Saint, s ſuch, has received no more from God, wes no more to his Grace, than he that ontinues the worſt of Sinners. That e is in a happier Condition, is from imſelf, and the good uſe of his Free-will. Grace was common, afforded him

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and others indifferently; it was his ow
Free-will that made the difference, so f
as there is any. Nay, a Saint in Glor
will, by their Doctrine, have no mo
reason to be Praising God, or Admirin
Christ, than one in Hell: But of th
hereafter.

The recovery of Man out of the sta
of Sin and Misery, into which he is fa
en, either by *Adam*'s Transgression, or h
own Wickedness; is more to be ascribed t
himself, than unto God; and so he ow
more thanks to himself for it, than to Go
He does more to Convert, to Quicken,
Sanctifie, to Establish, to Save himself, th
God does by his Grace; and so he has mo
reason to thank himself for all. The Lo
does very little, in comparison of wh
Man does in these great Concerns; a
that little which God does, would co
to nothing at all, if Man himself did n
give it efficacy, and make something
it: So that there is left very little grou
or occasion of giving Praise and Glory
God, where, if for any thing, the hig
est Praise and Glory is eternally due
him, and where above all he designe
the greatest Praise and Glory to himse
There seems much more occasion to ascri
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the Praiſe and Glory of Mans Salvation, both on Earth and in Heaven, unto Man himſelf: Not unto thee, O Lord, muſt they ſay, not unto thee, but unto our ſelves be the Praiſe, or at leaſt more unto our ſelves than unto thee. View this Doctrine well, and compare it with the Doctrine and Deſign of the Goſpel, and you will find them juſt as agreeable as Light and Darkneſs.

(13.) It *tempts men ſtrongly to neglect God* and their *Souls*, to live in any Wickedneſs their Inclination leads them to, and not to break off a Courſe of Sin by ſpeedy Repentance: For their pretended ſufficient Grace is univerſal, and denied to none; that brings Repentance to every Mans power and choice, he has Grace enough to repent if he will. And ſince it is in his own Power, he may take his own time for it, and need not fear to ſatisfie himſelf with the Pleaſures or Advantages of Sin.

What is to be feared, to reſtrain them here from the Practice of Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs? unleſs they will ſay, that common Grace being abuſed, may be withdrawn, and the Sinner by the Judgment of God given up to Obduration. Here would

would be ſome danger indeed, if that Obduration did irreſiſtably determine the Sinners Will to ſuch Wickedneſs: But there is no fear of that; for, by their Principles the Will cannot be ſo determined, either to good or evil; it is inconſiſtent with that Liberty which is eſſential to it, and which it cannot want while it is a Will. Therefore no light can be withdrawn, no hardneſs can be contracted; but the Will muſt ſtill be at liberty, to turn to God or not to turn, to repent or not to repent, at pleaſure. They have ſecurity, from their Principles, to go on in their evil ways, 'till they be in danger to live no longer; and then it is not a peradventure, if God will give them Repentance; they have enough for that in their own Power, and may repent and turn to God when they liſt. Accordingly, one of the prime Aſſerters of this Doctrine, being admoniſhed of his Debauches, made this return; I am a Child of the Devil today, but I have Free-will, and to morrow I will make my ſelf a Child of God.

(14.) It *deſtroys Juſtification of the Goſpel*, all Juſtification of Sinners, which the Goſpel gives notice of: It will have us Juſtified, not by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or

or of God, but our own Righteouſneſs; by our own Righteouſneſs, in the fulleſt and groſſeſt ſenſe; by a Righteouſneſs which is in our ſelves, and of our ſelves, and by our ſelves: By our own acts or works, not Performed by the help of any ſpecial Grace, but by the Power of Free-will.

Their Juſtification is thus ſtated: The act of Faith (or ſincere Obedience, or inherent Holineſs) though it be imperfect, yet is accepted of God inſtead of a perfect Righteouſneſs; and ſo by it we are Juſtified, as if it were a perfect Righteouſneſs. Now thoſe acts of Faith, or Obedience, or whatever they call it, which they will have to be the Righteouſneſs by which we are Juſtified, is not of Grace neither: It is not the Gift of God, he never purpoſed or promiſed to give it unto any: It is not the Purchaſe of Chriſt, he never merited it for any: It is not the Work of the Spirit of Grace, he does no more towards it in thoſe that have it, than in thoſe that never have it.

So that the Righteouſneſs whereby they are Juſtified, is ſo far from being that which Chriſt performed, that he did not ſo much as Merit it; ſo far from being

the Righteouſneſs of God, that he does not give it; ſo far from being the Iſſue of Gods Free Grace, that it is the Product of our Free-will. How Sinners are Juſtified, the Apoſtle declares in the Text, and *Tit.* 3. 7. and *Rom.* 3. 34. But by this Doctrine, we are ſo far from being Juſtified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus, that we are Juſtified without the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus; not freely, not by his Grace, but by acts of our own Free-will, paſſing for a perfect Righteouſneſs; when they are no ſuch thing, nor can upon any ground be ſo accounted.

(15.) It tends to *deſtroy the Covenant of Grace*; to make it a Covenant without Grace, I had almoſt ſaid an ungracious Compact; ſuch, wherein the Lord ſhews himſelf leſs gracious to Men, than if they had been left under the Covenant of Works; and under which, they are more liable to Sin and Damnation, than if it had never been made: Which thus appears.

The Covenant of Works required perfect Obedience; and Man, being created after the Image of God, with Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, was able to perform that perfect

perfect Obedience which was the Condition of that Covenant; but transgressing it by that first act of Disobedience, in eating the forbidden Fruit, he lost the Image of God, wherein his strength for observing the Covenant consisted: The Lord, they say, deprived him of that Holiness and Righteousness, and thereby of ability to perform the Condition. Now they say, a Man cannot sin in not doing that which he is not able to perform, though he be disabled by his own fault; and so in this state of disability, he was not capable of sinning, and consequently was not liable to Condemnation.

If things had continued in this state, none could have been Damned for actual Sin, but *Adam* only; and they say, for Original Sin none are Damned.

But the Covenant of Grace made a sad alteration in Mans state and circumstances; for therein, sufficient Grace being offered to all, whereby they may avoid Sin if they will; they hereupon become capable of sinning, as they were not before; and in danger of Damnation, when before they were safe. So that their Covenant of Grace makes Mans Condition worse than it was, instead of relieving

him, ſo far is it from being truly gracious; even the ſuppoſed Grace of it, brings him more within the compaſs of Sin and Damnation than he was without it.

(16.) It *Caſhiers the Spirit of Grace*, and all its ſpecial Offices and Operations. To paſs by thoſe who aſcribe nothing at all to the Spirit; thoſe who attribute moſt to it, ſo far as I can diſcern, will have us beholding to him for nothing at all, but common Light, ſuch as the Children of Darkneſs have; and ſo weak and powerleſs, that the Will needs not follow it, is not determined, nor effectually moved or inclined by it. The Spirit of Grace (with them) has no immediate Influence upon the Will or Affections; and this is all too which the Mind has from the Spirit, it moves neither Will nor Affections, but remotely, but by vertue of the Light: So that the Spirit of Grace does nothing in the whole Soul, Mind, Will or Affections, but what this light amounts to. No more is needful, either for the firſt riſe of Holineſs, or for the increaſe and growth, or the ſtrengthening and continuance of it.

At firſt, the Will, by no other help than that of Moral Grace, (which pre-

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tends to no inward Operation of the Spirit, but only this common Illumination; for the Propoſal is by the Word without, and the inforcing of Motives and Arguments, is by the Miniſtry of Man,) determines it ſelf to turn to God; and ſo, without more adoe, is Converted and Regenerated. There is the riſe of Holineſs; afterwards by determining it ſelf again and again, it acquires a habit, and that is a free and permanent Quality: That the Will exerciſes, increaſes, ſtrengthens and confirms Holineſs, as it began it, by determining it ſelf: It has Power to do this in and of it ſelf, and nothing elſe does, or can do it. The Spirit, neither by this Light, nor by any other gracious Influence, does, or can determine it: Nor does the Will need any thing for the exerciſe of its Power, but only Light to make a ſufficient diſcovery of the Duty or Object propounded. Thus all the Motions, Operations, Aſſiſtances, of the Spirit of Grace, are confined to this Light: All its healing, ſtrengthening, quickening and eſtabliſhing Vertue, amounts to no more than this: The Soul neither has, nor needs any ſpiritual Life, Health, Strength,

Hoornb. tom. 1. p. 316.

Strength, or Motion, either first or last, but what this does effect; and yet it effects no such thing in far the most that have it: For those have it, no less than others, who are, in the style of Scripture, not only in the dark, but Darkness. And if it have any more effect upon others, than it has upon the Children of darkness, yet this efficacy it must have from Free-will; not of it self, nor of the Spirit, (whom they call its Author,) otherwise it would be equally effectual in all, since all have it equally, and the Spirit is supposed to give it equally to all. And if the Spirit of Christ give it not its Efficacy and Vertue, but it owes this only to Free-will; it is of no worth as it proceeds from the Spirit, of no more value than a fruitless and ineffectual thing; of no Vertue, and so of no value, but what it derives from Mans Will.

Now what Honour is it to the Spirit of Christ, to ascribe to him a fruitless, a worthless thing? They seem to honour the Spirit as much, who will borrow no light at all from him; but count the light of Reason, with the help of the written Word, sufficient: And what great difference is there betwixt them who ascribe nothing

nothing at all to the Spirit, and thoſe that aſcribe to him that which is nothing worth? That which is fruitleſs and ineffectual, of no Vertue, of no Value, but but what it owes to Mans Will, may as well be aſcribed to humane Reaſon, as the divine Spirit.

(17.) It tends to *deſtroy the Mediation of Chriſt*: That liberty, which they make eſſential to Mans Will, makes Chriſt uncapable of being the Mediator between God and Man, and ſo tends to ruine all the concerns of God and Man in Chriſts Mediation. For, either the Will of Chriſt was undeclinably fixed upon that which is Good and Holy, ſo that it could not to Diſobedience and Wickedneſs: And if ſo, it had not that indifferency to good and evil, in which they place the liberty of Mans Will, and count it eſſential thereto, ſo that it cannot be a humane Will without it; and then Chriſt, wanting that which is eſſential to humane Nature, was not indeed a Man, nor did aſſume our Nature; conſequently could not be the Mediator between God and Man, being not the Man Chriſt Jeſus.

Or, if his Will was not undeclinably fixed on that which was good, but left

in a ſtate of indifferency to that or the contrary; ſo that he might have obſerved his Fathers Will, or not obſerved it; might have loved him, or not loved him; might have fulfilled all righteouſneſs, or not fulfilled it: And if he might have ſinned, or not ſinned, then he was not God; for he that is God cannot ſin.

So that as they ſtate the freedom of Mans Will, either he was not Man, or he was not God; and either way he could not be Mediator, who muſt be both. Thus all the advantages Sinners have by his Mediation periſh; and all the Glory the Lord deſigned to himſelf thereby, is blaſted by the extravagant Doctrine of Free-will.

(18.) It *defaces Redemption by Chriſt*, and leaves little or no place, or no neceſſity, either of Satisfaction or Merit, in his Obedience and Sufferings.

1. He did not *merit Faith, or Regeneration*, or *Holineſs*, or *Perſeverance*, for all, or for any particular Perſons. They declare expreſly, that it is fooliſhly ſaid, that Chriſt procured Faith or Regeneration for any: Their Principles ingage them to maintain this; for if he merited theſe for any, it would have been neceſſary that theſe

theſe ſhould have been wrought in ſome of the Redeemed; it would have been neceſſary, that ſome or other of them ſhould be Believers, regenerate and ſanctified, and ſtedfaſt unto the end; but all ſuch neceſſity they deny, as inconſiſtent with that freedom of Mans Will which they contend for. It muſt not be under any neceſſity, either from the Decree of God or the Purchaſe of Chriſt: Faith, Repentance, Sanctification, Perſeverance, muſt be meer Contingencies, in reſpect of thoſe former Cauſes; or elſe they could not be free Acts in reſpect of the Will, their next Cauſe. Chriſt, by his Death and Merit, muſt not be the Author or Cauſe of theſe, though there be no Pardon or Life without them; ſo much muſt not be aſcribed to his Merits, leſt too little be left to Free-will.

2. Upon the ſame Account, *Chriſt did not Merit Pardon* or *Salvation* for any one certainly; and ſo his Death makes neither the Means nor the End certain. After he had done and ſuffered ſo much, been obedient unto Death, made his Soul an Offering for Sin, and obtained Eternal Redemption by his Blood; yet there was no Neceſſity that any one Sinner ſhould have

have Pardon and Life; no Certainty, that any one would be Pardoned and Saved: Christ left this altogether uncertain, and not to be determined but by Mans Free-will. After Christ had finished the Work of Redemption, as all might have been Saved, so all might have been Damned; There was no Value, Efficacy, Merit or Satisfaction, in Christs Death or Obedience, to make more sure Work: It was left at uncertainty, as it were at hap hazard, whether Salvation or Damnation should carry it; and Free-will alone must have the honour to determine it. Christ, they say, procured by his Death a Power to destroy Unbelievers: So that he no more Purchased Salvation than Damnation; he is, by Vertue of his Death and Obedience, no more a Redeemer than a Destroyer of Mankind: Whether he should prove a Saviour of any, or a Destroyer of all, is left to the arbitrement of Free-will. There was, they say, no other Necessity, nor Advantage, nor Value, in the Death of Christ, but what might have been perfectly salved, though all the Redeemed had Perished Eternally.

Grevincov. in Amef. Coron. p. 142.

Idem.

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They declare for an Universal Redemption, and that equally extended to all and every one, and so would seem to magnifie it more than others: Yet indeed it is no other Redemption of all, but such as is very well consistent with the Damnation of all and every one. Christ loved them all, and washed them from their Sins in his own Blood; yet for all that, every one of them might have been Damned. Though they say, he Died and shed his Blood for the whole World; yet there's no Value, Efficacy or Merit, in the Death of Christ, in the Blood of God, to secure Pardon and Salvation, or any saving Advantage, to any one Person in the World. All might have Perished, for any thing he had effected by the Work of Redemption; and all had Perished certainly, if he had procured no more for them, than the Doctrine of Free-will can admit of; not one of them can ever come to Heaven, if Christ did not procure more for them, and more effectually, than their Doctrine will suffer them to acknowledge, or give him any thanks for.

3. If he did not *purchase Pardon and Life* certainly for any, nor Faith and Holiness, or other such necessary requisites there-

thereto, what then did he Procure? Why, he Procured, they ſay, a Covenant or Promiſe, that all ſhould have Pardon and Life, if they would Believe and Obey him.

But if, antecedently to Chriſts undertaking, the Lord had declared his willingneſs to ſave ſuch as Believe and Obey, there was no need of ſuch a Promiſe; and ſo Chriſt procured a needleſs thing, or nothing.

Or, if he did not purchaſe the Conditions of this Covenant, (*viz.* Grace to Believe and Obey) unleſs it was in the Power of their own Wills, without Chriſt, to Perform the Conditions; ſtill he Procured for them as good as nothing.

But if it were otherwiſe, yet thoſe who would have us to aſcribe to the Death and Obedience of Chriſt nothing but this, would not have us Obliged to aſcribe to it either Satisfaction or Merit. No Satisfaction, unleſs it be to his Fathers Will, not to his Juſtice in this ſenſe. The Obedience and Death of Chriſt was ſo fully ſatisfying, ſo very acceptable to his Fathers Will, he was ſo well pleaſed with it, that hereupon he entred into this Covenant. There was no need of other Satisfaction

tisfaction than this; it was enough, if he did Merit it; ſufficient, if his Righteouſneſs did deſerve ſuch a Promiſe for us.

Nay, there was no need of Merit: For, as the Lord was ſo well pleaſed with *Abraham*'s Faith and Obedience, as for his ſake he vouchſafed his Poſterity many Favours, though the Patriarch did not merit ſo much; ſo the Lord might be ſo well pleaſed with the Obedience and Sufferings of Chriſt, as for his ſake to make ſuch a Promiſe, without any Merit obliging him to it. Thus way is made, to ſtrip Redemption both of Satisfaction and Merit, without which it is, it can be no Redemption indeed; the Name may be retained, but the Thing denyed; all neceſſity of it, and all advantage by it too, but what is left to the arbitrement of Free-will.

(19.) It is *inconſiſtent with the Perfections and Attributes of God*; with his Mercy, Power, Wiſdom, Truth and Faithfulneſs, with his Soveraignty and Government of the World, and other Divine Excellencies. But, that I may not ſtay too long on this Subject, let me inſiſt only on theſe mentioned.

1. It *Defaces the Mercy* of God, and makes

makes it in effect no Mercy. They pretend indeed to repreſent God under ſuch a Notion as will indear him, and render him lovely to the World, upon the account of his Mercy and Goodneſs, the Extenſiveneſs and Univerſality; but when their Pretenſions are ſtrictly and impartially examined, they prove quite of another tendency: That Mercy which they aſcribe to God, is without an Object, or without Effect, or without Grace; a Mercy which is not an Honour to him, nor an Indearment of him to others.

1. It is a *Mercy without an Object*; a Mercy not for any certain Perſon, but for Qualities, which are no Objects of Mercy: A Mercy for ſome, when it appears not who they are, or whether there will be any ſuch. A Mercy for no Body, which pretends to be for all and every one, when it is not for any one. This is their antecedent Mercy, whereby they pretend that he loves all that Believe and Obey, before he knows who they are, and is uncertain whether ever any ſuch will be. It ſpeaks a reſpect to thoſe Qualities, but no Love or good Will for any particular Perſon.

2. It is a *Mercy without Effect*: They aſcribe

aſcribe to him a Will of Univerſal Salvation; when they diſcern it can be no other than a meer Velleity, an incompleat Intention, a weak ineffectual Deſire, a faint and fruitleſs Wiſhing of ſuch general Happineſs, when he knows it will never be effected, and is reſolved not to take the courſe to effect it. This is ſuch a Mercy, as juſtles out and claſhes with his other Perfections, and is inconſiſtent with his Knowledge, Power, Sincerity, Wiſdom, Bleſſedneſs, and Mercy it ſelf in the true Notion of it.

With his Knowledge; for who will deſire and deſign that, which he knows will never be effected? With his Power; for who will not effect that, which he really intends and deſigns, if he be able? With his Sincerity; for what Ingenuous Perſon will pretend to deſire and deſign that which he never means to bring about? With his Wiſdom; for who will Propoſe to himſelf an End, and never intend the Means, which are proper, and alone ſufficient to obtain it? With his Bleſſedneſs; for to fall ſhort continually of what one deſires and intends, is an Unhappineſs: With the Nature of Divine Mercy and Goodneſs; for that is not real good-

goodneſs, which does no good, or not the good it makes ſhew of. That is not ſaving Mercy indeed, which leaves the Objects of it miſerable, when it can relieve them; that wiſhes them well, but lets them periſh eternally. But that which they aſcribe to God, is ſuch a Mercy, as can well digeſt the everlaſting Miſery of all Mankind: Such a Love, ſuch a Goodneſs, as could be ſatisfied, if not one Perſon in the World ſhould be Saved.

They decry the Doctrine of their Oppoſers, as that which *ſtraitens the Mercy of God*, and confines it *to a few*; whereas indeed it makes Salvation ſure to very many. But by their Principles, for any Mercy there is in God, all Men may be Damned; nay, which is more, no Man can be Saved. By all the Mercy they aſcribe to God, no Man can eſcape Damnation; all being left to the arbitrement and indifferency of Mans corrupt and degenerate Will; which, without other help than Mercy in their way provides, will certainly ruine them Eternally. Mercy, they ſay, will Save all that Believe, and none elſe: But this Mercy intends not to work ſaving Faith in any; there is no Decree for that, it muſt be left to Mans Will; and

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if that be not better to him herein than the Mercy of God, he muſt unavoidably periſh. All muſt be Damned, unleſs Free-will help them by its own Power, without any effectual Aſſiſtance that Mercy prepared for them from Eternity.

3. It is a *Mercy without Grace:* A Mercy which is not free and gracious, which will not expreſs it ſelf to any, but ſuch as are Worthy, ſuch as have ſome Merit, or ſome Motive to Oblige him to be merciful. And being a Mercy that is not free and gracious, whatever Mercy of this Nature they aſcribe to him, we can never be ſaved by Grace.

Nay, ſince it is not Grace, it is not Mercy indeed; no Mercy that the Lord will own, or Sinners can have any advantage by: It is Affection of their own, not that Divine Excellency which he glories in, and glorifies upon loſt Sinners: For that which ſaves Sinners is free Mercy, and free Mercy is nothing but Grace. So that if we be ſaved without Grace, we are ſaved without Mercy too, that which is ſo indeed; and if they have no Salvation for Sinners, but that which is without Grace and free Mercy, they leave them none at all.

That they admit of no free Mercy, no Grace in God for Sinners, appears, in that they make his firſt Purpoſe of Love (the Decree, which comprizes all the Mercy he had from Eternity for particular Perſons) to have its riſe from Faith or Works foreſeen. He foreſees, that when it is left to the Free-will, to the choice of all; theſe will of themſelves, without Divine determining Power, Believe and Love him; others will not; and therefore he will Love, and purpoſes to Save theſe, and not others: And ſo he loves them not freely, but becauſe they Oblige him: He Loves them, *i. e.* He Purpoſes to Save them, becauſe they Love him firſt. Thus that which God foreſees in Man, is the Condition of the Mercy and Favour he intends; and ſuch a Condition, as is indeed the Cauſe, the Motive, and in the ancient ſenſe of the Word, the Merit of his Favour and Mercy: And ſo they leave no free Mercy in God for Sinners; and Sinners being capable of no Mercy at all, but what is free, they leave in him no Mercy at all for them. This is, in the Apoſtles ſenſe, *Gal.* 5. 4. to *fall from Grace*, to deny, to renounce all Grace, all free Mercy of God which the Goſpel diſcovers.

vers. The Doctrine of Free-will obliges them to disclaim all the Mercy of God, by which any Sinner can be saved.

2. This *destroys the Prescience of God:* Though they be concerned to maintain this, as well as we, and pretend to do it; yet their Doctrine is utterly inconsistent with it, and makes it impossible for him to foreknow certainly any thing that depends upon Mans Will: And so bereaves him of the certain foreknowledge of those things, which are of greatest moment and consequence, both to God and Man. For example.

He cannot certainly foresee, whether any will have the Gospel; the Preaching of it depends on Mans Will. And so, whether any will use the Light of Nature well; whether any will have moral Grace, any rational Advice or Excitement by the Word: Nor whether any will Repent and Believe, whether any will be Justified or Sanctified, whether any will Persevere to the end, whether any one will be Saved, nor whether any would be Redeemed; whether Christ would be put to Death, or any thing else, to which the concurrence of Mans Will is necessary. This is plain, because by their Principles, the Will

of Man is always indifferent to act or not to act; and ſo before, and until it act, it cannot but be uncertain whether it will act or not: (Nothing can make it certain, no Decree, no Act of God, without deſtroying its liberty;) And being uncertain, it cannot be certainly foreknown.

All that ever I could hear in Anſwer to this, was only, that Gods Knowledge is Infinite: And though we cannot comprehend, how that which is uncertain can be certainly known; yet an Infinite Underſtanding can reach it, and have the certain Knowledge of that which is Uncertain.

But this makes it more evidently impoſſible: For the more perfect any Knowledge is, the farther it is from Error and Miſtake. So Infinite Knowledge muſt be fartheſt of all from erring; but to know that as certain, which is not certain, is not to Know, but to Err; not to apprehend things as they are, but to miſtake and miſapprehend them, to have falſe and erroneous apprehenſions of them. As they ſtate the Freedom of the Will, God can have no certain foreknowledge of thoſe things, without falſe and erroneous Conceptions thereof. They leave him nothing

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here but Conjectures, or nothing but Mistakes and Error.

3. It Impeaches the *Truth and Faithfulneſs* of God; overthrows the Truth and Certainty of his Word, in all the parts of it; leaves no certainty of his Truth and Faithfulneſs in Prophecies, Promiſes, Threatnings, Aſſertions, contained in Scripture. It cannot be certain, by their Principles, that the Prophecies will be accompliſhed, the Promiſes fulfilled, or the Threatnings executed; and ſo it muſt be uncertain, whether they are true or falſe: There is no certainty that they will prove true, they may as well prove falſe. The ſame muſt be ſaid of many Aſſertions too; there is no Neceſſity, no Certainty, that they will prove true, *v. g. Can.* 1. 4. *Jer.* 31. 18. *Lam.* 5. 21.

By this Doctrine, there can be no *Neceſſity*, that *they will turn*, whatever Courſe the Lord take to turn them; or that they *will run after him*, what Courſe ſoever he take to draw them: And ſo thoſe Aſſertions are not Neceſſarily true, but may prove falſe; and ſo may thoſe, and the like to thoſe, *Pſal.* 119. 33, 34. This is manifeſt alſo in thoſe Predictions and Promiſes, where the Concurrence of Mans

Will is requiſite: For as they ſtate its Freedom, there can be no *Certainty*, which way it will incline and determine it ſelf, whether with the Word, and according to the tenor of the Prediction, or againſt it. Nor will they allow, that God can make ſure of it, or take any Courſe that will ſo determine it, that the accompliſhment of his Word ſhall not be defeated. For when he has done what he can to incline it that way which his Word requires, that it may prove true; yet it is, and muſt be left free to incline the other way, and make his Word prove falſe. Let us clear this by ſome inſtances, in each of thoſe parts of the Word, wherein the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God is (if any where) eminently concerned. There is an ancient Prophecy, of the *Calling of the Gentiles*, Gen. 9. 27. *God ſhall perſwade Japhet*, i. e. the Gentiles who deſcended from him, and they ſhall *joyn themſelves to the People of God.* Now by the Doctrine of Free-will, the Lord is to do nothing that can make it certain, that *Japhet*'s Poſterity ſhall comply herewith: He is only to Propoſe it to them by the Preaching of the Goſpel, and leave their Wills in an Indifferency, to yield hereto,

or

or not to yield. So that it muſt be a meer Contingency, whether this Prophecy would be accompliſhed or no, if it might prove true, ſo it might prove falſe. The ſame may be ſaid of thoſe Expreſſions, *Joh.* 10. 16. *Act.* 28. 28. *Joh.* 12. 32. The Truth and Faithfulneſs of God in theſe and other Prophecies is evidently expoſed, paſt all ſecurity their Principles can poſſibly give.

So it is likewiſe in the *Promiſes* and the Covenant of Grace, ſtyled *Everlaſting*; everlaſting Truth and Faithfulneſs being ingaged for the Performance of it, *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. Every Clauſe of this may prove falſe, and not be fulfilled to any one Perſon in the World: For, with them, the Lord does nothing which will certainly change the Hearts of Men, but only offers Arguments to move them to renew their own Hearts; and ſo leaves it to the arbitrement of their own Wills, whether ever the Promiſe ſhall take effect or not. Now, if it were poſſible, that it ſhould prove true, that Man ſhould make himſelf a New Heart; yet it is more likely that it ſhould prove falſe, becauſe Mans corrupt Will, to which it is left, is more inclined to make

it falſe than true. Take it at the beſt, to make the Truth of God in the everlaſting Covenant to depend on Mans Will, ſuppoſing it indifferent, is bad enough: For if it be indifferent whether God ſhall be True or no, it muſt be indifferent whether he be God or no.

Thus it will be, not only as to the Promiſes made *to us*, but alſo thoſe which are made *to Chriſt*, Iſa. 49. 6, 7. & 53. 10. & 55. 5. *Pſal.* 2. 8. & 72. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Jer.* 23. 5, 6. Theſe and the like may all prove falſe: Mans Will, to which it is left, may ſo carry it, and this unavoidably, that not one of them ſhall be made good. Nor will they allow the Lord to take any courſe with Mans Will, or have any ſuch influence on it, as will be ſure to prevent this, or make it any way certain, that his Truth herein ſhall not fail: He muſt not determine the Will that way which is neceſſary to ſecure his Truth in performing his Promiſes. Nor in the Threatning neither, *Rev.* 17. 16, 17. Whatever be ſaid of Gods *putting it into their Hearts*; yet they will not have us imagine, that the Lord will effectually determine their Wills to this; but theſe muſt be left free and indifferent, either

to

to Love or Hate the Whore; either to do what is foretold, or not to do it; to make it true, or to make it falſe.

Now if theſe parts of the Word of God may prove falſe, or if they be not certainly true, all the reſt will be ſuſpected, the Truth and Certainty of all the Scripture is overthrown: If the Truth or Faithfulneſs of God may fail us here, where can we be ſure of it? The glory of this Divine Perfection is uttetly defaced. The Truth and Faithfulneſs of God is the ground of all Divine Faith. We believe God, becauſe he is infallibly True, and what he ſays cannot prove falſe: But it may prove falſe by their Doctrine, and ſo the ground of all Chriſtian, of all Divine Faith is quite razed, and the Foundation of all Religion is hereby undermined, yea quite blown up.

4. It *deſtroys the Government of God*, as to the greateſt Concerns of the World. By their Hypotheſis, the Will of Man is not, cannot be ruled by him: He muſt not touch it immediately; it is a thing ſo Sacred, that a touch, even of God, may violate it. He muſt not Inſpire it with any new Quality, nor Move it by any real Influence, but only make his Addreſſes

dreſſes to it at a diſtance, by propoſing an Object, and offering Motives and Arguments: And if this will not do, (as it does not, nor alone ever can do, in the Concerns of Salvation,) he muſt leave it to it ſelf, to do what it liſt. Now that which is left to do as it liſt, is not Ruled, it is not under Government.

They will have the Lord to treat it as an Orator, not as a Soveraign Ruler. The Will (with them) ſeems to have a Soveraignty exempted from the Soveraignty of God; not ſubordinate to it, if not above it; not ſubjected to the Soveraign Government of God, further than to do what it liſt.

Hereby God is excluded from the Government of the World. Men are governed by their Wills, that is the Ruling, the Commanding Faculty; therefore if the Will be not under his Government, Men will not be under it, nor the reſt of the World, ſo far as it is governed by Men. If he Diſpoſe not of that which orders the reſt, what is there left at his Diſpoſal? All the Affairs of the World, which depend upon humane Conduct, will be governed more by the Will of Man, than by the Will, Power, and Providence

vidence of God : By the Will of Man independently, as if he were God ; but by the Lord of Heaven and Earth only Precariouſly, and at the Pleaſure of Mans Will, as if he were a Subject, an Underling, an inferior Creature.

5. It denyes the *Almighty Power of God*, will not admit him to be Omnipotent, and his Power Infinite : It is not Infinite, if it be bounded and limited ; yet Mans Will bounds and limits the Divine Power. By their Principles, the Lord can no way deal with the Will, but ſo that it may reſiſt him, and render all his Actings and Operations on it ineffectual : He cannot prevail with it in any thing ſo far, but that it may at once ſtand out and repell his Motions, render every Divine Attempt upon it ſucceſleſs : When he has done all that can be done by the Power of his Grace, the Will may be too hard for him ; it muſt be always left to do what it liſt. He cannot Save a Man, how much ſoever he intends or deſires it, unleſs it be the Wills Pleaſure : Nor can he take any Courſe to make the Will pleaſed with it. He can neither ſo Change the Faculty, nor ſo repreſent the Object, but the Will may ſtill reject it. He cannot

not work Faith in him, nor bring him to Repentance, nor Create Holiness in his Heart; nor can he Continue him in a state of Holiness, unless it please the Will to submit; nor can he bring it to submit so, but that it may refuse, when all is done that his Grace can do. He can make no particular Decrees concerning Man, that are Positive and Peremptory, because he cannot master Mans Will: His Purposes must be Conditional and Respective to Free-will. He cannot make good his own Word, not verifie what he Asserts, nor accomplish his own Prophecies, nor perform his Promises, if Mans Will stand in his way: Nor can he clear his way of it in any Method, but what the Will of Man may defeat. He cannot Accomplish his Desires and Intentions, if Mans Will resist him, and can never put the Will out of a Capacity of resisting and opposing, while it is a Will. It is essential to the Will, to be always able to resist; and if they stand not to this, they yield all: *Psal.* 135. 6. No, must they say, there are innumerable which God cannot do, unless Man pleases: *Phil.* 3. *ult.* Christ has a Power, whereby he *can subdue all things*, &c. No, must they say,

ſay, the things wherein he is moſt concerned of all other in this World, the Wills of Men, he cannot ſubdue to himſelf. *Prov.* 21. 1. No, muſt they ſay, neither the *Hearts of Kings*, nor of any other Men, are thus *in the Lords hands*: Whatever he does to turn the Current of them, they may run in the old Channel, and keep their own Courſe for all that: It is not whitherſoever he will that they turn, but whitherſoever they will, they run, for all his turning.

(20.) It *Idolizes Mans Will*, makes it in divers reſpects equal with, or above him.

It ſeems to *ſubject God*, and make him an Underling to Mans Will; and that in reſpect of his Will, his Word, his Grace, his Deſign. Some of theſe are apparent by what is already ſaid: Let me only inſiſt on one particular. It makes God dependant on the Will of Man, even for his Glory; where it is moſt intolerable for the Majeſty of Heaven to be dependant, and moſt inconſiſtent with his Infinite Perfection and Happineſs. The Lord in all the Operations of his Grace, leaves the Will indifferent either to comply or reſiſt. This leaves it to the Determination

nation and Arbitrement of Mans Will, whether God ſhall have the Glory of that, by which he deſigns to make himſelf moſt glorious. It muſt be in the Power of Mans Will to defeat God there, where he intends moſt of all to glorifie himſelf; to ſpoil and deface the glory of his Grace and Love, where the Riches thereof are moſt diſplayed: And this in the greateſt and moſt ſignal Inſtances of it, and where each Perſon in the Godhead are moſt eminently concerned.

Whatever Decree or Purpoſe of Love and Grace the Lord had from Eternity, to Save loſt Sinners, it muſt be at the Determination of Mans Will, whether any one ſhall be ſaved or freed from Miſery. After the Work of Redemption finiſhed by Chriſt, it muſt be at the Pleaſure of Mans Will, whether any one ſhall be actually Redeemed. After the Spirit of Grace has done what can be done, for changing the Hearts, and renewing the Natures of Sinners; yet not one of them ſhall be Changed or Sanctified, unleſs they liſt.

So that, unleſs Man will, when he is left indifferent, to will or not to will, electing Grace, redeeming Grace, renewing

ing Grace, ſhall be of no effect, ſhall never arrive at what it tends to. And if it be rendered of none effect, it is rendered inglorious, it is defeated, defaced, and the glory of it turned into ſhame. But ſo it muſt be, if Man will; all the Grace of God muſt be in vain, and all the Glory of it vaniſh.

Thus is God evidently made *dependant on Mans Will*, even for his Glory, that of his Grace; and he will as ſoon be ſubjected to the Will of Man in any thing, in all things, as the greateſt Concerns of his Glory.

The Grace of God, where it ſhould appear in its greateſt luſtre, and was deſigned for the greateſt Honour of Father, Son, and Spirit; muſt wait as a Handmaid on Mans degenerate Will, and be ordered at its Arbitrement, and ſtand to its Pleaſure, whether it ſhall come to any thing or nothing; whether it ſhall have any Glory or none.

Let them believe it who can, I can never believe that the Doctrine is of God, which offers ſuch an intolerable Indignity to him: If there were no other Argument againſt it, this ſeems enough to me. The

IV. Fourth

IV. Fourth Head I propounded, was to give an account of the *Objections* they make, and the *Prejudices* they have against the Doctrine of *Grace*; and to shew, the worst they can Object against it is as chargeable upon the Doctrine of Free-will. So that their imbracing it seems to proceed from neglect of Impartial Consideration, and some want of the Exercise of that Reason which they so much magnifie. That uses not to be counted a rational and considerate Invention, which serves not the turn for which it was devised, but runs them into the same difficulties which they seek to avoid. Let us see briefly in two or three of the chief Instances, whether this be not the Case here.

1. They Charge us with *making God the Author of Sin*: (*Tilenus* says this was the Reason that turned him off to the *Remonstrants*.) We disclaim and abhorr it, and Condemn those who assert any such thing. They say, it is the Consequence of our Doctrine, which will have things so ordered by the Decrees and Providence of God, that Sin is thereby unavoidable. We say, if God be made the Author of Sin on this account, their own

Doctrine

Doctrine is to be charged with making him ſo, by as good Conſequence. And ſo they muſt acknowledge that they wrong us, or elſe condemn themſelves and their own Principles.

That they are as liable to this Charge, if it be juſt, does thus appear. He that puts Men in thoſe Circumſtances, wherein he foreſees that they will certainly ſin, orders things ſo, that Sin becomes unavoidable: But by their Doctrine, the Lord decrees to place Men, and by his Providence diſpoſes them in thoſe Circumſtances, wherein he foreſees they will certainly ſin; *e. g.* The Lord foreſaw, that if *Adam* was Created ſo and ſo, and ſet in ſuch Circumſtances, he would certainly Sin and Fall by it: Yet foreſeeing this, the Lord decreed to Create him ſo, and diſpoſe of him in ſuch Circumſtances, and actually did it. He foreſees, that if *Peter* be put in thoſe Circumſtances wherein he was found in the High-Prieſt's Hall, he would certainly deny his Maſter: But he Decreed thus to diſpoſe of him, and by his Providence actually did it. This is the plain Import of their Doctrine concerning a Conditional Foreknowledge in God, as will be evident to any that underſtand

derſtand it. It was an Invention of the *Jeſuits* the laſt Age, to make good their Doctrine of Free-will and Moral Grace, and to avoid the ſuppoſed Inconveniences of the oppoſite Doctrine; and is commonly imbraced by thoſe who agree with the *Jeſuits* in their Opinion about the Power of the Will: But a very imprudent and unhappy Device it was, ſince it involves them in thoſe very Abſurdities, which it was deviſed to avoid.

2. They charge our Doctrine, as *making God unmerciful*, becauſe he gives not to the greateſt part of Mankind, that Grace which is neceſſary to Salvation: Whereas we deny not that God gives that Grace which they count ſufficient; we grant he gives all that Grace which is neceſſary by their Doctrine, even to Reprobates. But we ſay, their Doctrine, how much ſoever it triumphs in advancing and extending Gods Love to Mankind; yet it makes him far more unmerciful, in that it will not have God to vouchſafe that Grace which is neceſſary or ſufficient for Salvation, ſpecial Grace, to any at all. Meer ſwaſive Grace, which leaves it to the choice of Mans unrenewed Will, whether it will turn to God or no, which they

they ſay is all that God vouchſafes to any, did never alone, can never of it ſelf Save any Man: And ſo they will have, not only ſome, but all Men to Periſh, for any Grace that God gives them. Whatever Oſtentation it makes of magnifying Divine Mercy, yet what Doctrine can be more unmerciful, than that which leaves all Men to be Damned, unleſs their Free-will do ſomething more for them than the Grace of God.

3. They ſay, we *Impeach the Sincerity of God*, when he by his Word calls ſuch as Periſh to Repentance, that they may be Saved; and yet has Decreed not to give them Repentance, but to Damn them: So that it is certain, (while thoſe Invitations and Offers are made in the Word) that they ſhall not Repent and be Saved. This, they ſay, makes the Word and the Miniſtry of it Deluſive, and no better than Simulation, making ſhew of that to Sinners which is never intended, and which it is impoſſible they ſhould have.

The ground of this Charge, is a certainty that ſuch ſhall never Repent and be Saved: But their own Principles make this no leſs certain: For they ſay, God foreſees from Eternity that ſuch will ne-

ver Repent, and ſo ſhall never be Saved: And what he foreſees (his Foreknowledge being Certain and Infallible) will as certainly come to paſs, and is as impoſſible not to be, as that which he Decrees. Nay, they ſay, that the Lord, upon his Foreknowledge that ſuch would not Repent, did Decree from Eternity to Damn them, and never Decreed to give them Repentance, nor any Grace or Aid that would effectually bring them to Repentance; no, nor any, but what he certainly foreſaw would be ineffectual. So that here alſo they muſt either Juſtifie our Doctrine, as to this Charge, or Condemn their own.

4. They ſay, our Doctrine *makes God Unjuſt and Cruel*, in Exacting that from Men which they are not able to do; and Condemning them for not doing that which he gives them not ſtrength to do; *v. g.* for requiring Sinners to Believe and Turn to God, and Condemning them for not complying with him herein; when he knows they cannot do it of themſelves, and when he gives them no Grace to impower them for it. They make large Harangues on this Subject, tending to render their Oppoſites odious; and ſo them

them off with ſuch Similitudes and Illuſtrations as make Impreſſion on weak Minds, which are more apt to be taken with Words, than to weigh and conſider things. Whereas after all, the plain truth is, there is no Doctrine that I know of more chargeable with this, than their own. For it is very evident in Scripture, and in the Nature of the thing, that their ſwaſive Grace does not give Sinners ſufficient Power to Believe and Turn to God; it cannot ſubdue the Corruption of the Heart oppoſing this: It pretends not to give any new ſpiritual Principle of Life or Strength for theſe effects; it leaves the Will in its natural Impotency and Corruption, to do as it liſt. And therefore, ſince, by their Doctrine, he gives Sinners no more Power but this, and yet requires them to Believe and Turn to Chriſt, and Condemns them for not doing it; he Condemns them for want of that which he gives not ſufficient Power to do.

Can any one imagine, who will not offer plain Violence to a multitude of Expreſſions in Scripture, that meer Moral Swaſion, which does not ſo much as move the Will out of its indifferent Poſture, can Quicken thoſe that are dead in Sins

and Trespasses? can take away the Heart of Stone, and give Hearts of Flesh; or write his Laws in them; or make those Hearts that are desperately wicked, to become holy and heavenly? Can form new Creatures of the old Man, and make old things pass away, and all things become new? Can give Strength and Life to those who can do nothing, are without Strength and Life?

He that cannot believe this, in opposition to an hundred of such Passages in the Word of God, must believe that their Doctrine, concerning Free-will and Moral Grace, makes God to Condemn more than any, for not doing that which he gives them not Power to do.

5. They say, *We destroy the Liberty of the Will*, by bringing it under a necessity of inclining one way, and not leaving it indifferent to incline the other, or to suspend its Acts, *e. g.* When God intends to Convert a Sinner, and puts forth the Power of his Grace for this purpose, it is necessary that the Will incline no other way than his Grace moves it.

But if this destroy the Liberty of the Will, their *own Doctrine overthrows it*: For they Teach, that God, from Eternity,

ty, before any Act of his Will, foreſaw which way every Mans Will, in ſuch and ſuch Circumſtances, would incline. He foreknows certainly and infallibly, that in thoſe Circumſtances it will incline this way, and not the other. Now if he know that certainly, it muſt be Certain and of Neceſſity: For to know that as certain, which is not certain, is not to know but to miſtake, to apprehend a thing otherwiſe than it is. And if the Will might or could incline otherwiſe than he foreſaw, his Foreknowledge would not be Infallible: For that excludes, not only actual Error, but a poſſibility of it.

If then it be true from Eternity, that the Will muſt incline this one way, it is not indifferent to incline that way or another; and ſo its indifferency, its freedom from a neceſſity to incline but this one way, is gone by their own Principles. They muſt either grant, that the Liberty of Mans Will is conſiſtent with a Neceſſity of inclining one way and not another, or yield that their own Doctrine deſtroys its liberty.

Whether they will be ſo ingenuous or no, it is very certain that ſome Neceſſity may very well conſiſt with Liberty in

the freeſt Agents. God is Neceſſarily good, and yet Freely: So are the Saints and Angels in Heaven; they cannot but be Holy, and act holily, yet they are ſo, and do ſo freely. The Devils and Damned in Hell are neceſſarily Wicked, they cannot be other; and yet they are ſo, and act Wickedneſs freely: Wicked men on Earth, that are habitually and judicially hardened in Wickedneſs, they are neceſſarily evil, and cannot but ſin, and yet they ſin freely. So that this Conceit, though it be a fundamental Doctrine with them, and the main weight of their Cauſe lyes on it, that Liberty is inconſiſtent with Neceſſity; is againſt the ſenſe, reaſon and experience of Heaven, and Earth, and Hell.

Obj. If Salvation be of Grace, it muſt be a free Gift, offered and given freely: But we ſee in Scripture (and the Promiſes of ſaving Mercy make it plain) that it is offered, and ſo given upon Terms and Conditions required of thoſe that will be Saved. The Promiſes are many of of them expreſly Conditional; and ſo will the Covenant of Grace be, of which the Promiſes are but ſeveral Articles. Now that which is not Given or Promiſed,

sed but upon Terms and Conditions, seems not to be given or offered freely; the more Conditional, the less Free and Gracious.

Answ. The Offers of Salvation, the Promises of saving Mercies, notwithstanding any Conditionalness in them, any Terms annexed, are free and gracious, upon a manifold account: for in many cases, Conditions or Terms do not hinder a Grant or Promise from being free.

1. If the Condition be so only in respect of *outward Form* and Manner of Proposal, not properly and really: For then it seems to be a Condition, but is not strictly. So here: Gospel Promises are Conditional κατὰ τὸ φαίνεσθαι, not κατὰ τὸ εἶναι, *quoad externam formam & modum proponendi*, not *propriè & quoad rigorem*: as to manner of proposal they seem Conditional; but examin them by the Laws of Conditions, and they will be found rather Absolute. If the denomination must be taken *à majori*, or *à potiori*, if the Number or Weight will carry it, bring them to the Test, examin why they should be counted Conditional or Absolute; and it will be found, that in more respects, and for more weighty Considerations they ought to

to paſs for Abſolute, rather than Conditional, in the *Pelagian* ſenſe; ſo no reaſon to queſtion their Freeneſs.

2. If the *Condition* be *our Duty*. If ſuch, as when we perform it we do nothing but what we owe, and the Promiſer owes nothing to us for doing it; then, if he promiſe any thing, he promiſes freely. It is *promiſſio indebita pro opere debito*, that is *gratuita*. That which is not *ex debito* is *gratuito*. Theſe are oppoſed, *Rom.* 4. 4. That which is no way due, if promiſed, is freely promiſed. Now all that is required, is our Duty, we owe it; and for all that we can doe, God owes us nothing. *Debitum non redit in Deum: Præmium non eſt divini juris naturalis*; his Nature engages him not to reward his Creatures. That which he does this way is of free Will. *Deus ad præmium nemini eſt obligatus. Rom.* 11. 35. Eternal Life had not been due to *Adam*, if he had performed perfect Obedience; it was only the Promiſe intitled him to it. If not due to him, much leſs to us; he might vouchſafe no more Reward to us than to the inferiour Creatures. And ſince nothing is due from God, what he beſtowes or promiſes, he does it freely. When we have done

done all, we are but unprofitable Servants, we have but done our Duty, we can Chalenge no Reward: There is none due, therefore when he Promiſes any, he does it freely. The Condition being but our Duty, makes nothing due; no more than Reward is due to him that pays his Debts.

3. If the Condition be *Inconſiderable*, compared with what *is promiſed:* Suppoſe one ſhould Promiſe his Tenant a Thouſand Pound *per annum*, if he will pay him a Pepper Corn; would any ſay, this Promiſe is not free, becauſe of ſuch a Condition? Whatever the Lord requires of us, is no more than this, compared with what he Promiſes to us. Believing and active Obeying is not ſo much as Suffering; yet if the Lord ſhould have made Sufferings the Conditions of Promiſes, they would have been free in this reſpect: Becauſe the greateſt Sufferings (ſuch as *Paul*'s, and thoſe in the Primitive times) would be ſmall and inconſiderable, compared with the Glory Promiſed, *Rom.* 8. 18. 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Now if the hardeſt Conditions be ſo inconſiderable, what are the ſmalleſt? even nothing compared with what is Promiſed, Grace, Glory, God himſelf, *&c.*

4. If

4. If the Condition be not ſo much for the *Advantage of the Promiſer*, as to make us capable of the thing Promiſed. That which is not ſo much for the Advantage of the Promiſer, as for his to whom the Promiſe is made, muſt needs be from free bounty; the Promiſer herein more reſpecting the good of another, than his own: What can be more of Grace? Or if the Favour promiſed be not feiſable, without that which is propounded as a Condition of the Propoſal: If it be neceſſary to make Capable of that which is Promiſed, then it is rather a Direction how the Favour may be attained, than a ſtrict Condiction. It does no way Prejudice the freedom of the Promiſe, but rather renders it more Free and Gracious. But ſuch are many of thoſe things, which the Lord preſcribes as Conditions, they are more for our Advantage than his; he expects, he gets little or nothing by our Performance of them, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *Job* 22. 2. *Job* 35. 7, 8. What Advantage has the Lord by our Mourning, Senſe of our loſt Condition, Apprehenſions of the burden of Sin, Hungerings and Thirſtings after Righteouſneſs? Why then does he annex theſe to the Pro-

Promiſes; but becauſe without them we are not capable of thoſe Mercies which he is willing to beſtow? Chriſt comes to ſeek and Save what was loſt, *Mat.* 18. 11. *Luk.* 19. 10. Why is this Condition added? thoſe that are loſt, ſenſible of their loſt Condition; but becauſe Sinners are not capable of this Favour till then? they will not be found of Chriſt, 'till they feel themſelves loſt. Why Hunger and Thirſt before be Satisfied? *Matth.* 5. Becauſe the Soul is till then cloſed, ſhut up, not capable of Satisfaction, *Pſal.* 81. 10. How can it be filled, except firſt opened? ſo himſelf, *Mat.* 11. 28. Why Labour? becauſe not till then capable of reſt. When the Lord offers a Favour, and withall ſhews how it may be attained; he deals more Freely, more Graciouſly, than if he ſhould barely Propound it, and leave us to our own ſelves to find out the Way, and Means how it might be effected.

Conditions of this Nature are ſo far from making Promiſes leſs free, as they are rendered hereby more Gracious: There is as much of Free Grace in preſcribing theſe, as in Promiſing to them, becauſe without theſe the Promiſe might be of no effect, the Favour not feiſable, the Sinner not capable of it.

5. If

5. If the Condition *be eaſie*, no Coſt, Charge, Trouble or Hazard attend it: He that Offers upon ſuch eaſie Terms, Offers freely. If one ſhould Promiſe to Entertain his Friend, if he will but come to him; or Viſit him, if he will but let him in; or Advance him, if he be willing; or give him a Jewel that will enrich him for ever, if he will but receive it; or ſupply him with all his Heart can deſire, if he will but ask it: Would any Man have the Face to ſay, ſuch Offers were not Free and Gracious? are they not as Free as Heart can deſire? If a Man might chuſe his own Terms, could he Imagine, Invent, any more Eaſie?

Such are the Promiſes of the Goſpel: The Lord will *Entertain* Sinners, if they will but *Come*, Iſa. 55. 1. *Eaſe*, Mat. 11. *Satisfie*, Joh. 6. 35. Or as if it were too much for Sinners to Come to him; he will *Come to them*, if they but *Open* to him, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Give himſelf*, the Pearl of great Price, if but *Receive* him; *Marry*, if but *Conſent* to him, *Joh.* 1. 12. *Mat.* 22. 2, 3. *Give Eternal Life*, if but Willing, *Rev.* 22. 17. Give all Heart can deſire, if but *Ask* it, *Joh.* 16. 23. *Open the Treaſures* of Grace and Glory, if but *Knock*, *Mat.*

Mat. 7. 7. Be your Friend for ever, if but *Love him*, Joh. 14. 21. Bear the Weight and Burden of all your Cares, if but *lay them on him*, Pſal. 55. 22. *Never fail* you in Life or Death, if but *Truſt him*, Pſal. 34. 22. *Pſal.* 125. 1.

O! how Free are theſe Offers! how Eaſie theſe Terms! It would be intolerable Impudence, to deſire theſe upon any Terms more Free. Would you have Chriſt your Friend, and not Love him? Marry you without your Conſent? or take Care for you, and not Truſt him? who can be ſo unreaſonable? The Conditions here are of ſuch a Nature, that it is even all one as if they were abſolute: No Promiſe of this Nature can be more Free, more abſolute; for the Nature of what is Promiſed, will admit of no other Terms, they are as free as can be. Can Chriſt Come to you, if you will not let him in? or Entertain you, if not Come to him? or Give himſelf, if not receive him? Nor need you ſay, theſe are not eaſie, we cannot do them of our ſelves. Chriſt prevents this; they are eaſie, if he Concur and Aſſiſt; and he engages to aſſiſt all thoſe who have Intereſt in the Promiſes, all that Come to him.

6. If

6. If the Condition *be Promised*: He that annexes a Condition to a Promise, and withall Promises to give that Condition, does all one as if he Promised absolutely. Suppose *Hiram* had Promised *Solomon* Cedars to build the Temple, upon Condition they were Cut down; if *Hiram* had also Promised to Cut them down, his former Promise had hereby become absolute. Or suppose *Pharaoh* had Promised *Jacob* that he should come and be Entertained in *Egypt*, upon Condition that Wagons were provided to carry him; if *Pharaoh* should also send him Wagons (as he did by *Joseph*, Gen. 45. 19.) it is all one, as if the former Promise had been absolute.

So it is here: And this is enough, if there were no more, to make this Truth evident, and to prove it unanswerably. That which the Lord seems to make a Condition in one place, he Promises absolutely in another: For the Promises of Regeneration are absolute: The Lord freely engages himself to implant all Spiritual Graces and Holy Affections in the Soul. Now to these, either in habit or exercise, are all the Promises made, which we count Conditional. So that the Condition

dition of them being abſolutely Promiſed, they are in effect abſolute; *e. g.* The Lord Promiſes Salvation to Perſeverance, *Mat.* 24. 15. He promiſes Perſeverance to Faith, *Pſal.* 125. 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. and Faith is Promiſed abſolutely, *Ezek.* 36. 26. A new Heart is a believing Heart; ſo that the two former, their Conditions being Promiſed, are abſolute. He promiſes Life to thoſe that have Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 5. 12. He promiſes Chriſt to thoſe that Fear him, *Mal.* 4. 2. and he promiſes Fear abſolutely, *Jer.* 32. 40. So wherever you find any thing annexed to a Promiſe, as a Condition, in another place you may find it, either expreſly or implicitly Promiſed: And therefore all the Promiſes are, in this reſpect, as good as Abſolute; and if Abſolute, no reaſon to queſtion their Freedom.

If the Terms or Conditions be ſuch, as it is not poſſible in the Nature of the thing, that the Mercy offered ſhould be effected without them; then the offers of Saving Mercies are as Free and Gracious as can be, as there is any poſſibility they ſhould be; and no more can be deſired.

Let me clear this in one of thoſe Terms, which is comprehenſive of all the

reſt. It is required of thoſe, who will partake of *ſaving Mercies*, that they *leave ſin*, forſake their evil ways, *Prov.* 28. 13. *Iſa.* 55. 7. 2 *Tim.* 2. 19.

This is the Summe of all Conditions; and whatever is required in other Terms, is included in this, or may be reſolved into it. Now it is not poſſible, that ſaving Mercies ſhould otherwiſe be had, that they ſhould be received or enjoyed but upon theſe Terms; not only becauſe the Lord would have it ſo, but becauſe the Nature of the thing does ſo require it, that it is not otherwiſe feiſible.

For Sin is our Impotency: Now can we poſſibly have Strength in the inner Man, if we will not part with our Weakneſs? Sin is our Deformity, that which renders our Souls loathſome and ugly in the Eye of God. Now can our Souls be made Lovely, if we will not part with that which is our Defilement and Uglineſs? Can we be made Clean, if we will not part with our Leproſie? Sin is our Enmity againſt God, therein it conſiſts; Now can we poſſibly be Reconciled, if we will not lay aſide our Enmity? Sin is the Poverty of the Soul, that which robs and ſpoils, and utterly impoveriſhes the Soul: Now can you

you be made Rich, if you will not part with your Poverty? Sin is the Souls reſtraint, the Dungeon where it is impriſoned, the Bonds and Fetters wherewith it is loaden: Now is it poſſible you ſhould have Liberty, if you will not leave your Dungeon, and part with your Fetters? Sin is the Wound, the Mortal Diſeaſe of the Soul; and can you be healed, if you will not part with your Diſeaſe? Sin is your Miſery; can you be Happy, if not part with Miſery? Happineſs conſiſts in the Enjoyment of God; but adhering to Sin, and the Enjoyment of a Holy God, are utterly inconſiſtent: And can you be Happy without Happineſs, or by retaining that which is inconſiſtent with it?

So that you ſee, there is an utter impoſſibility that Salvation ſhould be had, but upon theſe Terms: There is an Inconſiſtency, a plain Contradiction, in any other Suppoſition. It is an Impoſſibility, not only to us, but to the Almighty; and therefore the Terms are as free and gracious, as poſſibly could be; Omnipotent Grace it ſelf could not make them more gracious.

To clear this, ſeveral things are to be obſerved:

(1.) The firſt Bleſſings of the Covenant are *Promiſed abſolutely*; Effectual Calling, Faith, Repentance, Converſion, Regeneration, are Offered, are Promiſed without any Conditions. The Promiſes of theſe Mercies are abſolute, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. Under the Notions of a *New Heart*, a *New Spirit*, putting *his Spirit*, *his Fear* within them, *&c.* the Bleſſings forementioned, called the firſt Grace, are Promiſed abſolutely; and ſo are the ſame things in other terms, *Jer.* 31. 31, 32, 33. repeated by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 8. 8. There can be no Inſtance given in Scripture, where theſe things are Promiſed upon Condition. Indeed if they were promiſed upon Condition, Grace would be Promiſed to ſomething Natural: For this being the firſt Grace, there can be nothing before it to be the Condition of it, but what is Natural; and to make that which is Natural the Condition of Grace, is groſs *Pelagianiſm.* If there were any Conditions of thoſe firſt gracious Favours, they muſt be thoſe things, which are Previous to, and Preparations for them, *viz.* Diligent Attendance on the Word and Means of Grace, Convictions of Sin, legal Sorrow for

for it, Senſe of Wrath and Miſery, which often go before Converſion, and are counted Diſpoſitions or Preparations for Faith. But theſe previous Works are not Conditions of Converſion, or the other Bleſſings included therein, nor are they promiſed upon ſuch Terms: For the Condition is never ſeparated from the Favour promiſed to it; where the Condition is performed, the Promiſe is always accompliſhed: But theſe preparatory Acts have been in many, who were never truly Converted and Regenerated, never had a New Heart and a New Spirit given them: So that theſe Preparations are no Conditions of Faith or Regeneration; much leſs is there any thing of congruous Merit in them. Our Divines, that inſiſt on ſuch Preparations for Chriſt, decryed the Conceit of Merit, though in the loweſt form. This Merit of the Papiſts inferrs a Dueneſs of the thing ſo deſerved; a Dueneſs in Congruity, thô not in Juſtice: And what is due from the Lord any way, he will infallibly beſtow: But there may be theſe previous Diſpoſitions, where Faith is never given. There is not ſo much as a Conditional Connexion between ſuch Preparations and thoſe Bleſſings; they are Promiſed abſolutely.

ſolutely, without any Condition expreſſed or implied.

(2.) The ſubſequent Bleſſings of the Covenant, thoſe that follow the firſt, are in ſome ſenſe *Conditional*, and ſo Offered and Promiſed in *a Conditional Form*, and yet are never the leſs Gracious. There are Terms and Conditions, taking the word Conditions in a latitude, as comprizing Qualifications, Adjuncts, and neceſſary Antecedents, which do no way derogate from Grace; neither detract from its Freeneſs, nor obſcure, but rather illuſtrate it, *Rom.* 10. 8, 9, 10. *Rev.* 3. Upon ſuch Terms are Juſtification, Adoption, Salvation offered, and not Offered but upon Terms, and yet moſt Freely and Graciouſly, *Rom.* 3. Freely by his Grace, and yet through Faith, no otherwiſe but upon ſuch Terms, *Joh.* 3. 18. Upon the ſame Terms we are Adopted, *Joh.* 1. 12. We are ſaved by Grace, but through Faith, *Eph.* 2. And not only Faith, but Holineſs of Heart and Life, and Perſeverance therein, are the Terms upon which Salvation is Promiſed, *Mat.* 5. *Heb.* 12. 14. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Mark* 13. 13. It is all one as if they were expreſſed Conditionally.

nally. This is not becauſe the Lord makes a Conditional Bargain with us, leaving the Condition to our own Wills, being uncertain whether it will be made good or no: But the reaſon is, becauſe Divine Wiſdom has made a Connexion betwixt theſe Bleſſings, ſo that they ſhall never be ſeparated; one of them ſhall not be had without the other: No Juſtification without Faith, no Salvation without Holineſs, no Glory without Perſeverance: And has Conſtituted an Order amongſt them, ſo that one of them muſt go before the other: We muſt Believe before we be Juſtified, and be Holy before we can ſee God. And has appointed one of them to be the Means or way to obtain the other; We are Juſtified by Faith, we are Created unto good Works, that we ſhould walk in them. Acts of Holy Obedience are the way wherein we muſt walk to Salvation: So that here is an Antecedence of ſome Duty, and that neceſſary by Divine Appointment and Command, and this tending to obtain a Favour freely offered.

And by this we may underſtand what a Condition is, in a ſenſe very innocent, and no way injurious to Grace. It is an

Antecedent neceſſarily required, as the way to attain or arrive at what is Promiſed.

And in this Senſe it muſt not be denied that there are Conditions in the Goſpel, and its Promiſes; unleſs we will deny that there are Duties neceſſary to Salvation, and made neceſſary by Divine Command: For ſuch a Condition is nothing but ſomething of a Command joyned with a Promiſe in a conditional Form; and Divine Commands muſt be no more queſtioned, when they are joyned with Promiſes, than when they are delivered apart. He Commands all to Repent, and he promiſes Pardon: Put this Promiſe and that Command together, and it becomes a Conditional Promiſe; if you Repent, you ſhall have Pardon, or as the Apoſtle delivers it, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *If we Confeſs our Sins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanſe us from all our Unrighteouſneſs.*

(3.) There are Conditions that *are Injurious to Grace*, and *Inconſiſtent* with it: None ſuch are annexed to any Promiſe of the Goſpel, none ſuch muſt be admitted by thoſe who will reſerve to the Lord

Lord the Honour of his Grace, or have our Salvation intirely aſcribed to it.

1. *Meritorious Conditions*, when the Condition is preſumed to deſerve what is Promiſed: There is no ſuch Condition of Salvation as this, but in the proud Fancies of Preſumptuous Sinners. For, 1. There muſt be a Diſproportion between that which is procured, and the Condition that deſerves it: It is of Favour, not of Merit, if the promiſed Bleſſing exceed the worth of the Condition. To make this plain; ſuppoſe the worth of a days Work be twelve Pence, a Man Promiſes another a thouſand Crowns for a days Labour; it cannot in any reaſon be imagined that his days Labour deſerves ſo much; if he receive ſo much, he has it of Favour not of Merit. Now the Diſproportion is far greater betwixt Salvation, and all that is required of us in order thereto: Sufferings for Chriſt are more conſiderable on this account than holy Actings; but all the Sufferings of this Life, ſuch as thoſe of the Apoſtle and the Primitive Chriſtians, bear not the ſleighteſt Proportion to the Glory Promiſed, *Rom.* 8. 18. there is no Proportion betwixt them;

them; the Glory offered does infinitely exceed them; it is the Eternal Injoyment of God himself; and between that which is finite and infinite there is no Proportion, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. If Glory were Promised on these Terms, as it seems to be, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. yet Suffering would be far from Deserving the Crown; there is no correspondent worth in them to so vast a Crown. Merit quite excludes Grace; for that which is deserved is due in Justice, it is a just Debt; but that which is of Debt, is not, cannot be, of Grace, if the Apostle understood these things, *Rom.* 4. 4. He makes a plain Opposition between Grace and Debt. And therefore, if by the Performance of any Condition we can deserve Salvation, it will be of Debt, and we must expunge the Text, and conclude we are not saved by Grace.

2. *Natural Conditions*, such as may be Performed by the Power of Nature, without the concurrence of Omnipotent or Special Grace. All that is required to Salvation, under the notion of Conditions, must be of this Nature, by that Doctrine which will have nothing necessary for the Performance thereof, but

Suasive

Suasive Grace: For this gives no Power sufficient for Performance; and therefore if there be any Performance, it must be by the Power of Nature. Their Grace gives not the Power, but supposes it in the Will already: All that it can justly pretend to, is to Excite what it finds, not what it gives. It does not, it cannot subdue the Wills Corruptions, natural and contracted, which is its Moral Impotency: And that which leaves it Impotent, as it found it, gives it not Power; it plants no Principle of Spiritual Life and Strength in the Will, but disclaims these expresly. And as it does not give the Power, so neither does it give the Act; it determins not the Will, nor causes it to Act; but leaves it to incline as it list, when there is no Principle in it to incline it towards that which is Saving, and Corruption enough to incline it the other way.

The Case standing thus, if the Will comply with the Terms of Salvation, it must be by its own Power, since it has no more from above: And then, in Opposition to the Text, Salvation will be of our selves, by our own Strength, not by Grace; nor will Grace which is Saving, be

be the Gift of God: For if he give neither the Power, nor the Act, who can imagine how it can be counted his Gift? They may as well say, we are Saved by the Power of Nature, as that the Conditions of Salvation are to be Performed by such a Power, without any other Assistance of Grace.

3. No *Legal Conditions*, no Conditions performed by us, nor our Righteousness. The Righteousness by which we are justified, the Righteousness by which we have Pardon, or by which we have Right and Title to Salvation. Neither Faith, nor sincere Obedience, are required of us for this end; nor can they, when Performed by us, be any such Righteousness. It is Christ, and he alone, that is our Righteousness; it is by his Righteousness, and that alone, that we are Justified: It was he, who by his Obedience to Death satisfied Divine Justice, and procured Title to Eternal Life. It is not pretended that any Performances of ours do or can satisfie Divine Justice; nor can it with more reason be pretended, that our Performances give us Title to Life. Those that say he did not both, may as

well

well ſay he did neither. Our Performances may evidence our Title, but they give it not, nor are the Ground of it. It is Chriſt, his Righteouſneſs, that is the only Foundation of our Title, *Rom.* 10. 4. The *End of the Law*, i. e. of the Covenant of Works, was, that Man, by the Righteouſneſs of Perfect Obedience, might have Title to Eternal Life; this being rendered Impoſſible in Mans fallen and ſinful State, how ſhall the End of the Law, which the Lord aimed at, be attained? Why, Chriſt attains the End of the Law by his Righteouſneſs, giving Title to Life to thoſe who believe.

Faith and *Obedience* are not our Righteouſneſs; now, as Perfect Obedience was to be in the State of Innocency, they are not in the ſtead of it, they have not the Vertue and Office of it, they are not Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, as that was of the Covenant of Works; *i. e.* They are not the Righteouſneſs by which we are Juſtified, and have Title to Life: It is *Chriſt* that *is the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs* to thoſe Purpoſes; and to aſcribe that to our Performances, which is proper to him, is injurious to the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

And

And how is it of Grace upon theſe Terms? how is the Covenant of the Goſpel more Gracious than that of Works? It cannot be ſaid that it is more Gracious, becauſe it requires and accepts leſs, ſincere Obedience being not ſo much as that which is Perfect: For ſincere Obedience may be counted as much to Man in his preſent State of Sin and Impotency, as Perfect Obedience in the State of Innocency and Perfection. But the tranſcendent Graciouſneſs of the Goſpel-Covenant, conſiſts not in requiring leſs Righteouſneſs to give Title to Life, than was due at firſt; but in not requiring a Perfect Righteouſneſs of us Perſonally for that end, but providing and accepting that of a ſurety, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 3, 4. The Law could not give us Life, becauſe being weakened by ſin, we could not Perform the Perfect Righteouſneſs which is required; but what the Law could not do, Chriſt has done, giving us Title to Life, fulfilling the Righteouſneſs of it in our behalf. But does not the Scripture declare, that our Obedience is the Obedience which gives Title to Life? *Rev.* 22. 14. I Anſwer, There is a double Right, *Jus ad rem*,

rem, and *Jus in re*; a Right of Title, and a Right of Poſſeſſion: Holy Obedience gives us not the Title, but leads us into Poſſeſſion. It gives not the Title, for that we have in Juſtification, *Rom.* 5. 18. Now Obedience is after Juſtification, and ſo cannot give that which is before it ſelf, and does not give that which is given already. But it leads us into Poſſeſſion, it is the Way by which we enter; ſo the Word immediately following will have it underſtood. When the Apoſtle had declared that we are Saved by Grace, *Eph.* 2. 8. and ſo excluded Works, *Verſ.* 9. that we may count this to be our Title to Salvation, yet he adds, *Ver.* 10. *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* Theſe are the Ways wherein we muſt walk, if we will arrive at Salvation; but they are not our Title to it, as Perfect Obedience would have been in the firſt Covenant, the Law of Works; they are not ſuch Conditions, they are not our Righteouſneſs, (upon which our Title is Founded) as that was deſigned to be: They are not Legal Conditions.

4. *Oblig-*

4. *Obliging Conditions.* There is no performance of ours, that can of it ſelf oblige the Lord to perform any Promiſe; the reaſon, becauſe it is defective, and falls ſhort of what is required: And amongſt men, he that promiſes upon Conditions is not obliged, if the Terms be not duely obſerved. The Law of our Creation required of us perfect Performances; and no leſs than perfect Obedience to God will be due from us, while we are Creatures. It is true, Man now wants Power to anſwer his Ingagements, but that was through his own fault; and the Lord does not loſe his due, becauſe Man ſins againſt him. Now being defective, and falling ſhort of his Duty, it is ſinfull; and that which is ſinfull, is to be puniſhed, not rewarded, as ſuch it has not a Moral fitneſs for promiſed Reward; that whichis ſinfull, brings the performer under the Curſe, *Gal.* 3. it deſerves eternal Death, *Rom.*6. and ſo cannot oblige the Lord to reward it.

Upon this account, the beſt performance of any ſuppoſed Condition, is ſo far of it ſelf from making any promiſed Bleſſing to be due in point of Juſtice, that it cannot make it due in point of Faithfulneſs.

That

That which needs Pardon cannot of it ſelf make any thing due to us, but Puniſhment. Our Faith, our Repentance, our Obedience, being ſinfully defective, cannot as ſuch make any thing due to us, but Puniſhment; and ſo cannot oblige the Lord to perform the Promiſes, to juſtifie, pardon, or ſave us: For that which obliges the Lord to execute the Threatning, cannot oblige him to fulfill his Promiſe. How then is the Lord obliged? How come the Promiſes to be accompliſhed? Why, not upon the account of our defective Performances, but for Chriſts ſake, and ſo through Grace.

Chriſt has ſatisfied for the ſins of his People, for the ſinful defects of their Performances: Upon his account they are pardoned and accepted, and ſo for his ſake they are rewarded, and the Promiſes performed. Thus, as 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. all the Promiſes are performed with unvariable Faithfulneſs; he engages the Faithfulneſs of God to fulfill all the Promiſes, when as our Performances, conſidered in themſelves, do oblige him and would rather engage him againſt it.

5. *Uncertain Conditions.* When it is uncertain whether the Condition will be per-

formed or no. Such Conditions have place amongſt Men, and Men only, ſuch as ſuſpend the Affair *in eventum incertum*, and leave it at uncertainty as to the Event; it is uncertain whether the Condition will be performed or not, and ſo uncertain whether the Promiſe will be performed. The Reaſon why Man propoſes ſuch Conditions, is his Weakneſs and Imperfection, for want of Power or Foreſight. He has not the Wills of others in his Power, cannot make them comply with his Will, and ſo cannot tell what they will do. So that it is alſo for want of certain Foreknowledge or Foreſight, when we will not beſtow a Favour on another, but upon Terms. If we were certain that the Terms would be obſerved, we would promiſe Abſolutely; if we were certain the Condition would not be obſerved, we would not promiſe at all; but becauſe we are uncertain, therefore we promiſe Conditionally. Now the Ground of theſe Conditions being Weakneſs, they muſt in no wiſe be aſcribed unto God. It derogates from his infinite Wiſdom, and infallible Foreknowledge; it derogates from his Power and Providence over mans Will and human Affairs: it derogates from the Efficacy of his

his Grace, as tho this could not determin mans Will, or prevail with it certainly and infallibly to comply with his Propoſals; but muſt leave it indifferent, and in ſuſpenſe, and ſo at uncertainty, whether it will comply or not comply with what he propounds.

For USE.

(1.) *Acknowledge this Grace?* How? By getting high Apprehenſions of it, and entertaining frequent Thoughts about it. Say, *How precious are thy Thoughts to me, O God! how great is the ſumm of them!* Let the Meditation hereof be ſweeter than the Honey and the Honey-combe.

(2.) Let this *beget ſuitable Affections*, Love, Joy, Admiration, Delight, both in the Fountain and Streams of Free-Grace.

(3.) Let it be *a Motive to all Holineſs and Obedience.* Let the Grace of God, the Love of Chriſt conſtrain you to an Obſequiouſneſs to him, and Affectionateneſs to one another. If God ſo loved us, how ought we love one another!

(4.) Let it *ſtrengthen our Faith* in Af-

flictions and Temptations, from the Power of Sin and sense of unworthiness.

(5.) *Hold it forth to others:* Take all Occasions to magnifie it; oppose every Practice and Opinion that obscures the Lustre of it. Use it as a Touch-stone, to discover what Persons are most holy, what Tenents are most true, even those which most illustrate Free Grace.

(6.) By *glorying in the Lord*; using it to make us and keep us humble. We had nothing to *merit*, nothing to move, for Salvation: what we are, or have, we are by, and have from this Grace. Let no man *boast*, *Rom.* 9. If you have any laudable, amiable Accomplishments, give the glory to God.

For *Motives.*

1. Consider, *how thankfull Gods ancient People* were for *Temporal Salvation*; what sweet Strains of gratefull Hearts appear in those Songs of Praises which we find Recorded usually after any Deliverance. And have we not much more reason to be thankfull for *Eternal Salvation?*

2. Con-

2. Conſider what a *comprehenſive Bleſſing Salvation is*, and take an Eſtimate thereof, by comparing it with the Temporal Deliverances of the *Iſraelites*: Thoſe proceeded from a Common ordinary Love, theſe from a Peculiar diſtinguiſhing Affection. Their Deliverances were effected, not without the Hazard of of their Perſons; our Salvation is Effected only by the Blood of Chriſt: The Iſſue of theirs was not much more than Civil Tranquility, ſitting under their Vines and Figg-trees; the Iſſue of ours is Grace, Glory, Joy, and thoſe things that Eye has not ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor have entred into the Heart of Man to conceive.

3. This is *the End of all God does in the World*, even to Glorifie himſelf; as *Rom.* 9. in ſhowing the *Exceeding Riches of his Grace*, in his Kindneſs towards us through Jeſus Chriſt: Now we have no other way to Glorifie him, but by an active affectionate Acknowledgment of his Grace.

4. This is *the Employment of gloryfied Spirits* in Heaven, to Praiſe, Admire and

Adore this Grace: This is the Subject of thoſe Seraphick Praiſes. The thoughts of this ſtupendious Love tranſports Angels and Men into an eternal Rapture. This is the way to be in Heaven upon Earth, to anticipate Glory, to enter into our Maſters Joy before we come at it: Nay, this is the way by which our Maſters Joy enters into us. Never are our Souls filled with ſuch Raviſhing Pleaſures, as when we are taken up with ſuch heavenly Employment. Never do we riſe higher above the World, than when theſe Thoughts wing our Souls: Nay, ſometimes they will *ſteal into Heaven*, as the *Iſraelites* Spyes into *Canaan*, and bring from thence into our Souls, Grapes, and Figgs, and Pomgranates, ſome taſte of what we ſhall fully enjoy in the Land of Promiſe.

Salvation is a comprehenſive Bleſſing; it includes the Eternal Love of God; that is its Foundation: Which Eternal Love broke forth in time into ſuch high Expreſſions, as to ſend his Son, to live miſerably, and dye ſhamefully for us, and intereſt us in all the Merits of his Death. This was the Purchaſe of Salvation, and it is the Concluſion; as thô unwilling thoſe whom he loves ſo well, ſhould be

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at ſuch a diſtance from him, takes us to Himſelf, to ſee his Glory, to Bathe our ſelves in that Stream of Bliſs, in thoſe Rivers of Pleaſure that are at his Right Hand. This is the Accompliſhment of Salvation; ſure this deſerves to be Acknowledged.

FINIS.

Books written and published by Mr. John Howe *Minister of the Gospel, and sold by* Tho. Parkhust *at the* Bible *and* three Crowns *at the lower end of* Cheapside, *near* Mercers Chappel.

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